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Social Action Series IV.

BIBLE AND LABOR

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BIBLE AND LABOR

BY

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WRITTEN FOR
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FOREWORD

The Book of books for all times is the Sacred Scripture. In this we find not only spiritual guidance for the individual, but social light and inspiration as well, such as no other volume can afford.

"Bible and Labor," while fully emphasizing the importance of the New Testament ideals bearing on the worker and his work, seeks in particular to offer a careful record and interpretation of the more than 2,000 years of varied labor history stretching on from the call of Abraham to the advent of Christ. The details for this study are gathered from that portion of the Sacred Books which in the main is accepted by all denominations alike, the Old Testament.

Catholic, Protestant and Jew are here upon common ground, and all orthodox believers acknowledge in these writings the inspired word of God. But the social significance of the Sacred Scriptures is no less universally recognized outside of these religious bodies, and its messages are freely quoted in connection with the vital questions of the modern world.

In Samaria and Jerusalem of old we behold, under outward difference of time and place, the essential problems of our day. In the long succession of those striking and heroic figures, the Prophets of Israel and Juda, we stand face to face with God's appointed spokesmen on the great issues of our own age no less than of theirs. In the Mosaic legislation on the ownership of land among the Jews we come upon the most remarkable and instructive of all property regulations in the annals of mankind. And finally, in the gradual material progress of the Hebrew race, from the nomadic days of the Patriarchs to the lavish splendors of the court of Solomon we view, in colorful scenes, the unfolding picture of social evolution, followed by a decline and catastrophe no less typical in the annals of the human race.

In the history of the ancient pagan nations, too, whose labor story is here briefly told, we learn to appreciate the meaning of religion in our own efforts for human welfare and industrial betterment. In the striking contrasts between Babylonic grandeur and the simplicity of the Hebrew pastoral life we sense keenly the vast difference between purely material and predominantly spiritual culture. In the Sabbath observance and the Sunday law, based alike upon the figurative seventh-day rest of the almighty Creator, we recognize the most far-reaching and humanizing of all labor legislations that have ever been enacted in all history.

These instances out of many will now suffice to make plain the vital interest and importance of the matter here presented, for the first time, in a complete and comprehensive form. Confirming the lessons and Scripture principles of the past and supplementing them with the Messianic message and example of Christ, a final chapter is devoted to labor in the New Testament.

The reader will doubtless be gratified to find in addition an incidental but careful treatment of such questions of modern research and intelligent popular interest as the discussion regarding the Pharaoh of the Oppression. Was it Thotmes III, Rameses II as is commonly believed, or even Tutankhamen? This is a subject to which the writer has devoted extensive study and on which he has arrived at definite conclusions.

An Appendix is added dealing in a non-controversial way with the Douay and King James' Versions of the Bible, and reproducing in its entirety the notable ecclesiastical document which may be called the classic of the Church on Scripture study.

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BIBLE AND LABOR

BIBLE AND LABOR

Chapter I

GOD, THE GREAT LABORER

God delights to be pictured in Holy Scripture as the great Laborer. Heaven and earth are the creation of His omnipotence. He needs but to will and all things are. Yet He is pleased to compare Himself to the toiling artisan. Six days He labors and on the seventh He rests.

In figures taken from the world of labor the heavens are described as the work of His fingers,[1] and the firmament is said to declare "the work of His hands."[2] How far He may have used the laws of evolution in these lesser labors which preceded His crowning creation of man, is not material here. All such laws must equally have come from Him and their constant application could be ultimately due to His infinite power alone. They were then no more and no less than the pliant tools of His eternal wisdom and omnipotence. Suffice it to know that the ends of the earth and the heights of the mountains are alike His workmanship. "The sea is his, and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land."[3]

Finally He created man, no less His handiwork, though set by Him over all other terrestrial works of His divine craftsmanship. For however exquisitely and wonderfully made by the hand of God, all these creatures exist for man only, to aid him in the love and service of his almighty Maker. Thus our

[1] Ps. viii. 4.

[2] Ps. xviii. 1. For a discussion of the bearing of the theory of evolution upon the Bible account of Creation, both from a Scriptural and scientific aspect, see the present writer's "Evolution and Social Progress." (Kenedy & Sons, 1920.)

[3] Ps. xciv. 5.

final view of the creation cycle is a striking picture of the almighty Laborer in the service, as it were, of His own creature, man, for whom God made and daily preserves in being this visible universe. Well might the Psalmist jubilantly exclaim:

> For what is man
> That thou art mindful of him?
> Or the son of man
> That thou visitest him?
> Thou hast made him a little less than the angels,
> Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor,
> Thou hast set him over the works of thy hands.[4]

Out of the clay of the earth, we know, man's body was wrought by the infinite wisdom and power of the supreme Artisan, the "divine Potter," as St. Augustine so happily calls Him, a figure which constantly recurs in the inspired pages themselves. "Hath not the potter power over the clay?"[5] St. Paul significantly asks. And in his pictureful language the Prophet Isaias, denouncing the perverse counsels of men who would lift themselves up against the all-powerful hand that gave them being, describes their folly:

> As if the clay should think against the potter,
> And the work should say to the maker thereof:
> "Thou madest me not!"
> Or the thing framed should say to him that fashioned it:
> "Thou understandest not!"[6]

Although a pure spirit, immaterial and incorporeal, Yahweh, "He who is," the one sole God, worshiped alike in the Old Dispensation and the New, does not, therefore, disdain to be revealed to us veiled in similes that picture Him, in human ways, as the divine Toiler, or impressively liken Him to the humble potter molding his clay and turning out the new-formed vessel on his lathe. Contrast with this for a moment the concept of labor that we find in the mythology of the most cultured of all the pagan nations of antiquity.

The Greeks eminently personified labor in their god Hephaes-

[4] Ps. viii. 5, 6.
[5] Rom. ix. 21.
[6] Isaias xxix. 16.

tus. By him were forged the thunderbolts of Zeus. He is pictured as lame and ungainly, the butt of the entire Olympian court. "Quenchless laughter," the Greek bard tells us, moves the hearts of the immortal gods as he limps about in their midst. One of the unwonted touches of humor in which Homer indulges, this picture exposes the soul of paganism. There was no honor for honest toil in the clouds of high Olympus, among its immoral gods and passionate goddesses. Much less could it be found in the men who worshiped them.

One of the best types, perhaps, of pagan heroes was the mighty Heracles, yet when the immortals wished to crush or to torment him they could think of nothing worse than to impose upon him immense labors. Heracles is the great Greek social worker. But his labors were not performed as a work of love. They were forced on him by bitter opposition that he met with indomitable energy.

Prometheus is fabled to have brought down fire from heaven, the indispensable condition for the easier exercise by man of the mechanical arts. Yet for this act he was chained by the gods to a desolate rock, that rose midmost in the storm-tossed sea, where a vulture ceaselessly tore at his flesh. Industrial labor, in the eyes of the cold and cynical Greek, was fit only to remain in the hands of the slave or the barbarian. Yet the latter disdained it no less. The Greeks themselves, Herodotus believed, had learned their disdain for labor from the Thracians, Scythians, Persians, Lydians and the other "barbarians," who "think little of those who learn a trade and of their descendants."[7]

In the earlier, simpler and more religious periods, labor was often held in greater regard, particularly agricultural work and labor connected with military life. The oldest lays of Rome, as Mommsen points out, celebrated both the war-god Mamus and the skilled armorer Mamurius. Volcanus, too, the god of fire and the forge, is named in the earliest list of Roman festivals. The last craftsmen permitted under the Servian organization to take their place in the ranks of the Roman army with the freeholding classes were those belonging to the

[7] Herod. Hist., II. 167.

trades deemed necessary for war. It was not labor, but war, then, that was held in esteem.

Paganism had no regard for the toiling masses. Babylonia, Assyria and Egypt, like Greece and Rome, wrote their history of labor in blood and suffering. The same was true wherever paganism flourished. Let us be sure, also, that the modern disdain of labor on the one side and fear of labor on the other are ultimately to be regarded as signs of the revival of paganism which has brought in its train impurity in the home, disorder in society, inhumanity in the relations between man and man, and crime and immorality of every kind.

But the Bible itself, some imagine, converts work into a curse. This is an entirely false conception. All work is not the penalty of man's fall, nor yet is it a curse of God. The Scriptures on the contrary, tell us: "And the Lord God took man, and put him into the paradise of pleasure, to dress it, and to keep it."[8] Here, therefore, his work was definitely assigned on God's initiative for His own good purpose. Even in Paradise he was not to lead an existence devoid of manual employment. Bodily employment was allotted to him from the beginning in the very garden of delight.

The sentence pronounced against fallen man was not that he should begin to work, but that his work was now for the first time to turn into pain and drudgery, though pleasurable still in many instances. It was, in a word, to become all that at present we associate with "labor and toil." Yet even this galling labor was not to be shirked, but to be accepted with willingness as man's portion in his new and greatly altered existence. Thus the Scripture records the sentence of God pronounced upon Adam:

> Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.[9]

[8] Genesis ii. 15.

[9] Genesis iii. 17–19.

But if hardship and pain were henceforth often to accompany human efforts, there was likewise to be found a compensation in the great merit that could be gained supernaturally in labor performed with patience and humility. Divine love could give priceless value to even the slightest manual act, and purity of intention raise it to a worth beyond the triumph of armies and the inventions of genius. Finally, to lift up labor to its loftiest dignity, the almighty Builder of the universe, the Molder of the stars and planets, the divine Potter, who had shaped the plastic clay into human form and breathed into its face the breath of life, Himself came down to earth, assumed in the virgin womb of Mary that same creature form, and labored and toiled like the humblest artisan, in the sweat of His brow.

There, in the carpenter shop of Nazareth, by the side of His earthly foster-father, Joseph, behold Him standing forth for all time, in truth and in reality, God, the great Laborer.

Thus the New Testament confirms and sublimely rounds out the Old. From the Builder of the universe to the Carpenter of Nazareth; from Yahweh, the God of the Prophets, to the same God made man and toiling in the midst of men, is a transition none too violent for our human reason to accept and our heart to grasp with an ecstasy of service and devotion. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."[10]

[10] John i. 14.

Chapter II

THE GREATEST LABOR DOCUMENT

Labor among the Hebrews, according to the Old Testament, was never intended to be the hopeless treadmill which it became under paganism. Not only did God dignify manual labor by portraying Himself as the great Worker, whose fingers wrought the heavens, and whose hand modeled into beauty the clay from which we came, but by His own example He also enforced the lesson of granting the laborer the much needed rest by which alone he can retain his human powers unimpaired. Deny man this fitting relaxation and you break or brutalize him. You degrade God's handiwork, so lovingly and admirably fashioned.

In the Book of Genesis the supreme and purely spiritual Being images Himself as a worker engaged in a six-day task. "And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done." Though the Hebrew word for "day" may be taken also to represent a period embracing indefinite eons of years, yet the metaphor of the Almighty as a day-laborer remains perfect and unaffected. The social lesson it contains is of the highest significance. Without exaggeration we may unhesitatingly say that no merely human document, no secular legislation or event in the whole range of history has so profoundly influenced for good the destiny of labor as this single passage:

> So the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the furniture of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had done. And he blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.[1]

The law of one day's rest in seven is not indeed expressly prescribed here. But by his example almighty God conveys a

[1] Genesis ii. 1–3.

lesson clear and convincing for all generations of mankind, which will never be set aside.

At what time the observance of the Sabbath itself was introduced as a custom among the people of God we do not know. The first reference to it in the Sacred Scriptures is at the time that the children of Israel are told to gather on the sixth day a double quantity of the mysterious manna that was given them from heaven, for: "Tomorrow is the rest of the sabbath sanctified to the Lord."[2] Evidently, therefore, it was not even then a new institution. The Sinaitic legislation gave legal sanction to this previous custom. Thus is the law laid down in Deuteronomy:

> Six days shalt thou labor, and shalt do all thy works. The seventh is the day of the sabbath, that is, the rest of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not do any work therein, thou nor thy son nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant nor thy maid-servant, nor thy ox, nor thy ass, nor any of thy beasts, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest, even as thyself.[3]

With the sunset of Friday evening the Sabbath began, and it ended with the setting sun of Saturday. Viewed from a social aspect only, no other labor law was ever of such tremendous effect. Yet the Sabbath law too was to be interpreted reasonably. To the Pharisaic restrictions, which our Lord so severely condemned, correspond, in later days, the Sabbatarianism and Blue Laws applied to the Christian Sunday. "The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath,"[4] is the divine gloss upon this law.

The Church, under the New Dispensation, was not obliged to observe the Sabbath of the Israelites. Among the Jewish observances from which the Christian is freed St. Paul expressly mentions the Sabbath.[5] The Gentile converts met on Sunday, the day of the Lord's Resurrection, for their religious worship, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles,[6] and elsewere in the

[2] Exod. xvi. 23.
[3] Deut. v. 13, 14.
[4] Mark ii. 27.
[5] Col. ii. 16.
[6] Acts xx. 7.

Sacred Books. When the distinctly Hebrew congregations disappeared the Sunday remained as the day of the Lord. By rendering this of obligation as a day of rest from all servile work the Church once more followed the divine example of one day's rest in seven, and thus enacted anew the greatest of labor laws.

The Scripture itself urges comparison between the bitter Egyptian servitude, to which the Israelites had been subjected, and the Sabbath law of mercy, which was to extend not merely to the Hebrew, but also to his foreign servant, and to the very brutes that labored in his field.

There was no Sabbath known in Egypt, nor elsewhere in the pagan world. In the early Babylonian country from which the Jews derived their origin we find an institution implying periods of seven days, the last day of which was known as *shabattu* or *shapattu*. But this, entirely unlike the Hebrew Sabbath, brought no rest to the slave or toiler. It followed the phases of the moon and consisted in certain penitential ceremonials to appease the anger of the Babylonian deities. It is not, of course, impossible that here might be found a vague echo of a primal revelation which had lost its significance and social effectiveness under paganism. Possibly this revelation continued, however, to be treasured in certain families, though mingled often with strange beliefs and was finally handed on from Abraham down to Moses under God's special Providence.

Paganism has everywhere heretofore been oppressive to labor, and modern paganism holds out no better hopes for the workingman. In striking contrast to the Sinaitic legislation was the law of the pagan Pharaoh, denying all respite to the children of Israel. Over and above the oppressive burdens already weighing down upon them in the enforced making of bricks, he further imposed the impossible task of gathering the straw needed for this purpose. The answer to the appeal of the Israelitic laborers for compassion was the scourge on the shoulders of the Hebrew overseers, when the men failed to produce the full tale of bricks required of them.

> And the overseers of the work pressed them saying: "Fulfil your work every day as before you were wont to do when straw was given you."

And they that were over the works of the children of Israel were scourged by Pharaoh's taskmasters, saying: "Why have you not made up the task of bricks both yesterday and to-day as before."[7]

Yesterday, to-day, and every day—one endless drudgery of toil! Such is the pagan treadmill to which modern taskmasters did not hesitate to return, in countless instances, when the influence of the Church had for a time been swept away from the industrial world. Abolish religion, and labor can but return, under one form or another, to that same Egyptian servitude from which God freed the Israelites. Of this servitude He reminded them, through Moses, that He might keep them faithful in the observance of their Sabbath:

Remember that thou also didst serve in Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out from thence with a strong hand, and a stretched-out arm. Therefore hath he commanded thee that thou shouldst observe the sabbath day.[8]

But it was not merely cessation from work that hallowed the ancient Sabbath and is now to sanctify the Christian Sunday, as we well know. To bring man into closer communion with his Creator, to lift him up to dwell on higher things than the mere material needs of the body and to perfect within him the image and likeness of God are the purposes of the Lord's own day. The labor of the entire week is indeed to be a prayer and an act of religion. By purity of intention, union with our Maker, and loving obedience to His holy will our lives are to be wholly consecrated to Him, but this one day in every week is to be singled out above all others for prayer, devotion and recollection. It is the Lord's own day. Yet it is not a day of gloom, as the Sabbatarian would make it, but a day of joy for man, to rejuvenate his powers and dedicate anew his life to the high end for which he was made: to know, love and serve God, and so to save his soul. Could anything be more ennobling?

Eloquently and strongly the Catholic Hierarchy of the United States, assembled in 1884 at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, set down the Catholic doctrine upon this subject in words that have gained merited recognition from Protestants

[7] Exod. v. 13, 14.
[8] Deut. v. 15.

as well. It is in fact from a Protestant publication that I here directly quote them. With keen insight the assembled Prelates thus pithily describe the significance of the Sunday observance:

There are many sad facts in the experience of nations, which we may well store up as lessons of practical wisdom. Not the least important of these is the fact that one of the surest marks and measures of the decay of religion in a people is their non-observance of the Lord's Day.

In traveling through some European countries a Christian's heart is pained by the almost unabated rush of toil and traffic on Sunday. First, grasping avarice thought it could not spare the day to God; then unwise Governments, yielding to the pressure of Mammon, relaxed the laws which for centuries had guarded the day's sacredness, forgetting that there are certain fundamental principles which ought not to be sacrificed to popular caprice or greed; and when, as usually happens, neglect of religion had passed, by lapse of time, into hostility to religion, this growing neglect of the Lord's Day was easily made use of as a means to bring religion itself into contempt.

The Church mourned, protested, struggled, but was almost powerless to resist the combined force of popular avarice and Caesar's influence, arrayed on the side of irreligion. The result is the lamentable desecration which all Christians must deplore. And the consequences of this desecration are as manifest as the desecration itself.

The Lord's Day is the poor man's day of rest; it has been taken from him, and the laboring classes are a seething volcano of social discontent.

The Lord's Day is the home day, drawing closer the sweet domestic ties, by giving the toiler a day with wife and children; but it has been turned into a day of labor; and home ties are fast losing their sweetness and their hold.

The Lord's Day is the Church Day, strengthening and consecrating the bond of brotherhood among all men, by their kneeling together around the altars of the one Father in Heaven; but men are drawn away from this blessed Communion of Saints, and as a natural consequence they are lured into the counterfeit communion of Socialism and other wild and destructive systems.

The Lord's Day is God's Day, rendering ever nearer and more intimate the union between the creature and his Creator, and thus ennobling human life in all its departments; and where this bond is weakened an effort is made to cut man loose from God entirely, and to leave him, according to the expression of St. Paul, "without God in the world."

The profanation of the Lord's Day, whatever be its pretext, is a defrauding both of God and his creatures, and retribution is not slow.

The greatest of all labor laws, therefore, in their effect upon mankind have doubtless been the Sabbath law of the Jews and

the Sunday law of the Christian world. Yet many other holidays were granted to labor in the Old Testament, and the Church in turn was to multiply her feasts in the Ages of Faith, granting ample time to every man for rest and prayer and the sweet delights of the family circle. Even the Saturday half-holiday was well known in the Middle Ages. But the greatest of all labor documents, to which both the Sabbath and the Sunday laws stand related, as the fulfilment to its ideal, is the passage quoted from Genesis, describing the six-day work and the seventh-day rest of the Lord our God, Yahweh, "He Who Is," the one sole uncreated Being, without beginning and without end. Sacred forever by His example is the one day rest in seven.

Chapter III

LABOR'S PLACE IN SCRIPTURE

The Sacred Scripture abounds in references to labor. We read of its importance, its worth and its rewards. We can follow the thread of its history through the Old Testament, and realize the meaning of the words of holy Job: "Man is born to labor and the bird to fly."[1] In the New Testament labor receives a still higher dignity. It is in the home of labor that the long predicted Messias appears, and the men He gathers most intimately around Him, as He begins His public mission, are a group of sun-tanned workers. Yet no class is excluded from His love and service. From the custom house He calls forth Matthew to give him a place among His very Apostles and Evangelists, nor does He reject the invitations of the wealthy in order that He might, also, save their souls. But it is with the humble toilers and the poor that He most freely consorts, albeit his sacred body was to be consigned to the rich man's grave. These are Scriptural commonplaces familiar to all.

The story of pastoral and agricultural labor, as far as the Scripture relates it, begins with Abel, who was a shepherd, and Cain, who was a husbandman.[2] These occupations Adam doubtless worked at and taught his sons. His own superior intelligence, darkened though it was, as a result of the Fall, cannot have sunk to the depths of barbarism and savagery into which large groups of the human race, as history and archeology bear abundant testimony, were in later epochs to decline. He himself had not been without previous experience in manual work, as we know from the task assigned to him in the garden of Paradise: "to dress it, and to keep it."[3]

[1] Job v. 7.
[2] Gen. iv. 2.
[3] Gen. ii. 15.

Generations later, the Sacred Book tells us, at length occurred the birth of Jubal, who was the father of all such as in future were to play upon the harp and organ. It is sufficiently clear, then, that both string and wind instruments had by this time been invented, primitive as they may have been in form and tone. At the same period, too—which, in a material sense, would seem to have been the first great cultural era achieved by the already numerous human race—Tubalcain won distinction for his craftsmanship. Together with Jubal, he is the earliest skilled workman known in authentic history. He was a "hammerer and artificer in every work of brass and iron."[4] Jubal, we may presume, manufactured as well as played his instruments of music.

Yet handicrafts of many kinds had previously existed. At a far earlier date Cain had "built a city"[5] by which assertion, however, we must not understand anything akin to a modern city of stone and metal. In all these Scripture statements there is nothing that need be understood so as to conflict with attested scientific facts. True science, carefully distinguishing between theory and incontestable evidence, has on numberless points wonderfully confirmed our Scripture records. For a more detailed treatment of this phase of the subject, the reader is referred to the Scripture studies in my previous volume on "Evolution and Social Progress."[6]

Harash or *Horesh* is the general term for artisan in the Bible. Its root appears in the verb meaning "to cut," and it is applied to workers of different kinds. Usually the name of the material in which the craftsman worked is added to specify his trade. A great variety of crafts are directly or indirectly mentioned in the Bible and a high degree of artistry was shown in the building of the tabernacle in the desert, fifteen hundred years before our era. Yet there were other nations which had reached the pinnacle of their civilization before the Israelite came on the scene and in turn slowly evolved his own material civilization.

Devolution is as marked a fact of history as evolution, and

[4] Gen. iv. 22.
[5] Gen. iv. 17.
[6] See especially chapters xviii and xxx. (Kenedy & Sons, 1920.)

cycle follows cycle. Nations decline from the heights of material culture and their scattered remnants are sometimes lifted up again from barbarism or savagery, to gather in course of time the learning of the ages into the new domed and spired cities they erect. But under every form of culture, the great fact of toilsome labor must remain for the human race, unchanged, and as it began with Adam in the Fall: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."[7]

When the Semitic Babylonian, Abram, was called to depart from Haran, where his father had settled after leaving "Ur of the Chaldees," the clan which sprang from him, naturally devoted itself at first to pastoral occupations. The necessary arts and crafts at this stage were practised at home by the members of the household, both men and women. The selling of Joseph into captivity in Egypt, and the providential events that followed, gradually introduced many of the elements of Egyptian culture among the Hebrews. This was succeeded by the long agricultural era, when they were exposed to Chanaanitic influences and came into contact with the Phoenicians by reason of the maritime and commercial enterprise of this nation. Finally, owing to neglect of the divine laws, a baneful form of capitalism arose in the later epochs. Such is the bare outline of a picture whose details I shall by degrees develop as our discussion proceeds. A vast canvas is here to be filled in by means of the abundant material at hand in Sacred Scripture bearing in one way or another upon our great central theme, human labor, the most engrossing in all history after religion itself, with which it is intimately and vitally connected.

Manual labor was never despised by the Hebrew of the Old Testament. Even the learned Rabbi in later days had a manual trade which he practised, but particular honor was shown after the conquest of Palestine to the agricultural worker. "Hate not laborious works, nor husbandry ordained by the most High," is the expression of the Israelitic code on labor as we still find it in Ecclesiasticus.[8]

Respect for the free tiller of the soil, it is true, was to a

[7] Gen. iii. 19.

[8] Ecclus. vii. 16.

certain extent retained even by the Greeks and Romans in that pagan civilization in which labor was everywhere held in disdain and trodden under foot. Yet this last vestige of a better tradition disappeared when husbandry itself was absorbed by unfree labor, and the fair and prosperous farm-fields of Italy were made hideous by the unsightly barracks erected for the slaves. But the Hebrew traditions and teachings prevented labor in Palestine from ever falling into such disgrace.

"The Lord be with you," says Boaz, as he comes out from Bethlehem to visit the reapers in the field. "The Lord bless thee,"[9] is the answer they return to him. Whoever encountered laborers in the field as he passed by greeted them with a blessing. Such a practice is thought to have been the custom in the Old Testament days, among the people of God. When the Psalmist wished to call down the divine wrath upon the men that hate Sion, upon the future persecutors of God's Church, he asked that they might be as grass that withers where no one, passing by, has blessed the reapers:

> Let them be as grass upon the tops of houses, which withereth before it is plucked up, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that gathereth sheaves his bosom. And they that passed by have not said: "The blessing of the Lord be upon you; we have blessed you in the name of the Lord."[10]

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gedeon, calling him to deliver Israel out of the hand of Madian, the heavenly visitor came as the future leader of God's people was threshing wheat and cleansing it by the side of the winepress. "The Lord is with thee, O most valiant of men," was the greeting the angel gave as he unfolded his message. "Behold," protested Gedeon, "my family is the meanest in Manasses, and I am the least in my father's house."[11] Yet, even as he had been swinging the flail on his threshing floor and was winnowing his wheat in the wind, God had chosen him for great things.

Honest toil of whatever kind is in honor with God. Saul, the tall and brawny country lad, was unconsciously approach-

[9] Ruth ii. 4.
[10] Ps. cxxviii. 6–8.
[11] Judges vi. 11–15.

ing his royal destiny while engaged in the homely task of seeking the asses that had run astray from his father's fields; and David, the shepherd boy, was preparing, in God's providence, for his high achievements while feeding the flocks at Bethlehem. So in the New Testament, the Saviour called Simon and Andrew as they were busy casting their net into the sea: "Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men."[12] And so, too, He summoned James and John, His beloved disciple, as they were sitting in the ship with their father, mending their nets, and at His summons they "forthwith left their nets and father, and followed him."[13]

Hence the Bible urges diligence in work and reprehends idleness. In the Old Testament, the sluggard is told to consider the ways of the ant and to learn wisdom from her: "Which, although she hath no guide, nor master, nor captain, provideth her meat for herself, and gathereth her food in the harvest."[14] Of the man eager at his task it is said: "Hast thou seen a man swift to work? He shall stand before kings";[15] and of the model housewife: "She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle."[16]

It is true that natural rather than supernatural motives are here kept before the servants of Yahweh. The time had not yet come for the more purely spiritual teachings of Christ, and obedience to them which was to be made possible for us by the grace of the Sacraments and by His own divine example. Thus the Book of Proverbs beautifully dwells upon the natural consequences of idleness:

> Thou wilt sleep a little,
> Thou wilt slumber a little,
> Thou wilt fold thy hands a little to sleep;
> And want shall come upon thee as a traveler;
> And poverty as a man armed.[17]

[12] Matt. iv. 18, 19.
[13] Matt. iv. 22.
[14] Prov. vi. 7, 8.
[15] Prov. xxii. 29.
[16] Prov. xxi. 27.
[17] Prov. vi. 10, 11.

Diligence, on the contrary, was to have its abundant reward: "If thou be diligent, thy harvest shall come as a fountain, and want shall be far from thee."[18] The Book of Proverbs, from which we have here been quoting, dwells with insistence on the natural returns due to honest toil and effort: "The hand of the industrious getteth riches,"[19] and: "In much work there shall be abundance."[20] But spiritual progress, too, is impossible in idleness, while: "The soul of them that work shall be made fat."[21] Hence the admonition of Ecclesiastes, which it is well for everyone to make the rule of his own life: "Whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly."[22] Might we but all apply to our spiritual apostolate in this world his words addressed to the Hebrew husbandman:

> In the morning sow thy seed,
> And in the evening let not thy hand rest;
> For thou knowest not which may rather spring up,
> This or that.
> And if both together, it will be the better.[23]

He who in idleness allows the time for doing his task to pass by is reminded that thereafter he may well he left to beg in vain for the bread which he failed to earn. Could the case of the inveterate idler be better expressed than in these few words?

> Because of the cold the sluggard would not plough.
> He will beg therefore in the summer and it will not be given him.[24]

The place and dignity accorded to labor in the New Testament will be considered in the final chapter.

[18] Prov. vi. 11.
[19] Prov. x. 4.
[20] Prov. xiv. 23.
[21] Prov. xiii. 4.
[22] Eccles. ix. 10.
[23] Eccles. xi. 6.
[24] Prov. xx. 4.

Chapter IV

LABOR IN THE ANCIENT MONARCHIES

To understand more correctly and appreciate more highly the conditions of labor pictured in the Sacred Scripture, it is necessary to cast at least a rapid glance at the condition of the workers in the great Oriental monarchies of the past.

Thousands of years before our era the rich alluvial plain watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates was the scene of contending city monarchies, whose respective kings sought to gain supremacy over each other. The primitive inhabitants of these regions are spoken of to-day as Sumerians or Akkadians, and little is definitely known of them. They were the dwellers in *Shin'ar,* wherein lay Babylonia, the ancient Sumer and Akkad. Here was the cradle not merely of the Babylonian Empire, but of its daughter Assyria, and quite probably also of Egyptian civilization.

The early settlers in this region of the Scriptural Sennaar were not Semitic, as modern researches have made sufficiently plain, and as the Book of Genesis definitely indicates in tracing them back to Chus, and thus making them descendants of Cham (Ham):

> Now Chus begot Nemrod: he began to be mighty on the earth, and he was a stout hunter before the Lord. . . . And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, and Arach, and Chalanne in the land of Sennaar.[1]

It has been inferred that these cities are probably mentioned in the inverse order of their antiquity, Babylon, is mentioned first because possibly it was most in the popular mind, while Nippur, the Chalanne of Genesis, although it is believed to have been founded first, is put in the last place. Little is known of the condition of the great masses of the people during these early periods, which go back as far as the fourth or the fifth

[1] Gen. x. 8–10.

millennium before our era. Outside of the industrial and commercial centers, their life was doubtless mainly pastoral and agricultural. At some later period a Semitic wave of immigration or invasion resulted in the course of time in the Semites gaining the ascendancy. Much of the earlier art and refinement of the highly developed Sumerian culture was retained in the new civilization that arose under these conditions.

The evidences of labor's handiwork, however, become plain to us in the earliest Babylonian edifices. Already we notice the characteristic style of the ancient Oriental architecture. We are all familiar with the outlines of a Babylonian temple as archeologists describe that interesting structure, "with its rectangular base carefully placed so as to present its angles to the four cardinal points of the compass, its receding stages, its buttresses, its drains, its sloped walls, its external staircases for ascent, and its ornamental shrine crowning the whole." The same style of building had seemingly been transferred before the days of the conquest to Mexico and Central America, on the American continent.

Thousands of laborers were needed to erect the now crumbled piles of that old-world Babylonian grandeur. This was particularly true of the immense temple platforms. It has been calculated that about 30,000,000 bricks were used in the construction of what is known as the Bowariyeh mound alone. These huge pedestals, it is thought, were probably the work of captives, and all this labor of manufacture and transportation was accomplished by naked human strength. Details, however, regarding the fate of the workers themselves are entirely lacking for this early period.

Out of the land of Sennaar, the Scripture tells us, "came forth Assur, and built Ninive, and the streets of the city, and Chale."[2] This makes Assyria an outgrowth of Babylonia, and again scientific investigation confirms the Scripture account.

When Assyria had in turn risen to power and preeminence, the labor of its multitudinous captives can be described almost as accurately as if we had stood at the very site of the vast

[2] Gen. x. 11. The reading, "He (Nimrod) went forth into Assur (Assyria), etc.," is considered more accurate by Oussani.

monumental structures when the fierce war lords rode up in their gilded chariots to view the thousands of laborers toiling to immortalize the name of a Sargon or Sennacherib. We can see the captives, too, at the work of transportation. Horses were considered too noble and highly prized to be used but long strings of human beings responded, instead, to the stroke of the Assyrian rod, whether the enormous cut stones were to be tugged up the river by lines of men on either bank, or the great winged bulls were to be dragged along the well-prepared roads upon heavy rollers. Almost every detail of every scene is depicted faithfully upon the monuments of this conquering race, and the record survives to our day.

That the great masses of workers so employed were foreign captives is clear. The more responsible tasks were assigned to the Assyrians, although we find them engaged also in mechanical work of many kinds: arranging levers and rollers, steadying the huge carved stones, or even filling and drawing the handcarts. By voice or horn, the ancient megaphone, they signaled their orders to the gangs of forced labor which were grouped according to nationalities, and presided over by the callous Assyrian overseer with raised rod that freely descended on aching shoulders and bleeding sides.

These captives had been taken off by thousands in various military campaigns. With slight regard for their human needs they had been herded and driven away to the great Assyrian capital. Here they were sorted into skilled and unskilled, the latter quarrying and transporting stone, manufacturing brick and performing similar tasks. Their women, the monuments indicate, were more gently treated, and were even mounted on mules and carts on their journey to their new Assyrian masters who are rightly characterized as the Romans of the Orient. We behold them, as they are pictured, with stocky figures, and brawny limbs, resolute and imperious, but also sensuous and cruel. In onset we can imagine them fierce as the bulls that everywhere figured in their art. Of their treatment of the captives, whom they forced to construct for them the mighty monuments that still cumber the earth, Rawlinson graphically says:

Chaldeans, Aramaeans, Armenians, Cilicians and probably also Egyptians, Ethiopians and Jews were employed by thousands in the formation of the vast mounds, in the transport and elevation of colossal bulls, in the moulding of bricks and erecting of the walls of the various edifices, in the excavation of the canals, and in the construction of the embankments.

They wrought in gangs, each gang having a costume peculiar to it, which probably marked its nation. Over each were placed a number of taskmasters, armed with staves, who urged on the work with blows and severely punished any neglect or remissness. Assyrian foremen had the general direction of the works and were entrusted with all such portions as required skill or judgment. The forced laborers often worked in fetters, which were sometimes supported by a bar fastened to the wrist, while sometimes they consisted merely of shackles round the ankles.

The king himself often witnessed the labors, standing on his chariot, which on these occasions was drawn by some of his attendants.[3]

Building, boating and agriculture were the chief occupations of the workers, aside from domestic services. There was little opportunity for rebellion. We even find the taskmasters of the foreign labor gangs pictured with a dagger in their left hand as well as the uplifted rod in the right. There was no opportunity given for labor conspiracies. The gross and sensuously materialistic religion of the Assyrians, with its lascivious ceremonies, found its natural counterpart in this cruelty and ruthlessness.

In the Babylonian monarchy, too, which still continued to exist for many centuries, side by side with her daughter State Assyria, vast labor forces must have been used to construct such monuments as the famous Hanging Gardens, rising in tiers upon tiers of arches with luxurious apartments between their mighty spans, and giant forest trees growing upon the topmost platform. Of the walls of Babylon, with their hundred gates, we have differing estimates. Their height is variously described as from 75 to 335 feet, and their width as from 32 to 85. Their circumference was forty miles. What tears, what blood, what miseries and tragedies were cemented with these stones! But victor and vanquished, king and slave, have passed away. The broad walls, as the Prophet foretold, have been broken down, and the high gates of Babylon have been burned with fire. It has been swept with the besom of God's wrath: "I will make her sea

[3] "The Seven Great Monarchies," pp. 465, 466.

desolate and will dry up her spring, and Babylon shall be reduced to heaps."[4] Such literally has been the fulfilment. It is a region of mounds, the ruins of once palatial buildings. Of the great wall itself not a vestige is left.

Yet long years before this time, as the Code of Hammurabi discloses, there was developed here a complicated system of commerce, industry and finance comparable to that found in our own great metropolitan cities of to-day. The laws too were more humane towards the slave than the inhuman legislation regarding these unfortunates in classic Greece or Rome. But the source of the Code of Hammurabi must be looked for, as has been rightly stated, in the customs of still earlier times, which in turn were influenced by the original revelation. There was a blending of Semitic and non-Semitic factors in the development of Babylonian culture.

It may be noted in passing that Professor Albert T. Clay, in his "Empire of the Amorites," looks upon Amurru as the home of the Northern Semites. From this highly developed cultural center, reaching back into prehistoric ages, he believes, groups of adventurous Semites emigrated in all directions. We must, however, postulate a civilization in the land of Sumer or Babylonia, which ante-dated their arrival. At all events an interesting picture is offered us of this people by one of the countless thousands of unknown Oriental artists, who also exemplify the high degree of craftsmanship attained by these ancient workers. Professor Clay says:

A very important mural painting was found in a tomb of a governor of Sesostris III, named Khnum-hotep, which throws considerable light upon the land of Amurru in this era. It depicts the visit of thirty-seven men, women and children, who are Semitic Asiatics, called "Amu." Generally the Egyptians despised the "Amu," which is the usual designation for the dwellers of Palestine. The "Amu" are headed by the chief of the highlands, Abesha, who is depicted presenting a fine wild goat. A kilted attendant leads an antelope. The people are all richly dressed; the women, besides wearing sandals, are depicted with socks. One man is playing upon a lyre. Their possessions are tied to the backs of asses. The scene presents a picture of highly civilized people, the equivalent it would seem of that which Egypt possessed, at least from their appearance. The inscription reads: "The arrival, bringing eye paint, which thirty-

[4] Jerem. li. 36, 37.

seven Asiatics (Amu) bring to him. Their leader is Sheik of the hill-, country, Abesha." This name is the same as the Hebrew Abshai.[5]

We do not accept every conclusion that Professor Clay draws from his studies in this field. There seems, however, no good reason to doubt that there was an early Semitic invasion in "the land of Sennaar." The prehistoric clans descended upon it from the north, overcame the primitive non-Semitic civilization, and in turn were profoundly influenced by its early culture. All this, as we have seen, is in perfect accord with the passage from Genesis already quoted, which makes the founder of Babylon and Nippur of non-Semitic ancestry.

The Jews were descended from these Babylonian Semites of later days through Abraham. The name Abram, which he then bore, is still to be found in extant Babylonian tablets, dating back to periods long preceding as well as subsequent to the departure of Abraham from Haran, when the voice of God called him out of the pagan house of his fathers to become the founder of a new nation, that in him all the kindreds of the earth might be blessed.

The magnificent but predominantly material development of the great Oriental monarchies of Babylonia and Assyria brought on a great religious and moral decadence. Labor inevitably suffered. The same spiritual deterioration, we shall find, held true of Egypt, with which we shall deal more extensively in another chapter. Setting aside for the moment the fate of its slave population, Egyptian records show how even the free laborer was obliged to toil without respite for the merest pittance to sustain the spark of life in his exhausted frame.

Seventy-five Egyptian pyramids are still in existence. Some, at least, of the royal builders of these stupendous piles are reputed to have been the oppressors of their own people. The historic account of the erection of the great pyramid of Cheops is a case in point. There is no good reason why the story of Herodotus regarding it should not be taken as substantially accurate, since confirmative evidence can be drawn from other instances.

In the construction of this work laborers were kept at work in

[5] Empress of the Amorites.

relays of 100,000 at a time, for thirty years, a tour of this duty lasting three months. Ten years were expended in the construction of the road, along which the huge stones were drawn from the quarry to the banks of the Nile by sheer man power alone. The suffering endured by the workers was of no consequence to the proud builders of the pyramids. Another twenty years were consumed in the erection of the huge structure itself.

How the tremendous blocks of stone were brought from the further shores of the Nile, how they were lifted up and set in their appointed places, no one knows. The finer work on the hard stone was done by bronze saws with rows of jewels for teeth. The 2,300,000 blocks that went into this time-defying but senseless pile and which are estimated to have weighed 6,000,000 tons would have sufficed to build a city for 120,000 inhabitants. The smooth limestone facing that covered it has all been carried off.

What was the purpose of this gigantic, engineering enterprise? What public good did it serve? It was all meant to satisfy one man's vain desire to pile up a dead load of soul-crushing rock over the mere husk of his body when the spirit had flown to meet its Judge. The crude materialism of his creed encouraged him in this, toiling millions of his own subjects, or of wretched slaves and pining captives, were worn out and cast away regardlessly to assure a proud magnificence to his embalmed remains, that perhaps at some future day—such is the irony of fate!—would be disinterred and exposed among the fractured relics of forgotten things to feed the idle curiosity of staring multitudes. In the meantime, at any rate, he would lie, under his star-pointing monument locked away with death, in golden state. Prompted by greed and covetousness, his own immediate successors would attempt to break in and rob his tomb, for such was customary procedure in the Valley of the Kings. Not satisfied, indeed, with plundering the tombs of their predecessors, certain Pharaohs sought even to appropriate the very deeds of the dead by erasing from their monuments the names inscribed in them and chiseling their own, instead, into the patient stone.

We need but cast a glance at ancient Persia, that last of the great Eastern Monarchies, where more than elsewhere was

effeminacy enthroned. Cosmetics, delicacies, rarest viands, luxurious couches, rich and softest cushions, together with an extreme disdain of toil and commerce, here brought to its height that worship of the flesh which in all these ancient pagan monarchies went hand in hand with heartless cruelty towards others. Such cruelties the Persian monarchs visited freely upon their own royal courtiers. The noble was no more to be envied than his slave, for death amid the utmost refinement of torture awaited him at his monarch's slightest suspicion or merest whim. Such was pagan culture which modern nations revive as they forget the practice of the Christian Faith.

Chapter V

UNDER THE TENTS OF THE PATRIARCHS

The history of the Hebrew people constitutes one of the most interesting and instructive studies in social development. It is a story not merely of evolution, but of devolution as well. With material in sufficient detail and under guidance of unquestionable authority, we are enabled to follow the success and failure of this remarkable race from which the Saviour Himself was to be born according to the flesh.

Ur of the Chaldees, the original home of Abraham, the father of the Hebrew people, was doubtless once a populous and highly commercial city, a great center of Babylonian progress in the days of the Ur dynasty, which dated back to about 2500 B. C. Thence, with his pioneering father Thare, Abraham migrated to the frontier town of Haran. On their way they passed near to the enormous walls of Babylon, encasing at that time one of the most notable material civilizations in the history of mankind.

The zenith of Babylon's greatness was in all probability reached under Hammurabi, whose reign may be set at about 2050 B. C. We have every reason for believing that he was a contemporary of Abraham. Archeologists, in fact, have little hesitation in identifying him with the "Amraphel, king or Sennaar," spoken of in Genesis, with whom Abraham later came into conflict.[1] In Sennaar (*Shin'ar*) we located Babylonia. This country, as we have seen, had in the days of Abraham a marvelously developed system of commerce, finance, and industry which astounds us to-day, as we study it minutely summarized in the famous Code of Hammurabi. Its general material progressiveness is one of the marvels of history.

[1] Gen. xiv. 1.

Just how far Abraham, in his early years, had partaken of the culture of his homeland it is difficult to say. There is in all his dealings a princely nobility of bearing which would seem to indicate familiarity with a high degree of material civilization. His father, Thare, who had lived in the prevalent Babylonian idolatry, was a pioneer, and yet may have come from a family that had been settled in Ur, perhaps for centuries.

With Abraham God wished to make, as it were, a new beginning. Yet, judged from a purely materialistic point of view, a retrogression may well appear to have set in with him. Sociologically he is frequently classed as a nomad, one of those wandering tribesmen whose tents are pitched wherever the fields supply the richest herbage for their cattle and the greenest pastures for their flocks. By the same standards, Abraham's rank is compared with that of a modern Bedouin sheik of some Arab clan. Be that as it may, no one would deny that morally he lived on a level high above the kingly courts of his day; above the splendid nobles, obsequiously served by countless slaves in their luxurious palaces; above the pagan priests themselves, whose lavish pomp in their imposing temples was too often foul with lascivious rites. His personal grace and dignity blended becomingly with the not inartistic surrounding of his nomadic home. But above all things he was the familiar and confidant of God, the repository of divine revelations, the holder of most wonderful pledges such as were never underwritten by any mortal hand, for in him all the kindred of the earth were to be blessed.

Here then is the first important lesson, which sociologists too frequently fail to grasp: the greatness of men is not to be measured by their material surroundings, or their supposed cultural stage, nor are the periods of civilization to be judged by these deceptive standards. Not unusually, in fact, the lowest depths of corruption go hand in hand with the utmost magnificence of material prosperity and the ultra-refinement of sensual culture. Precisely these conditions are the harbingers which almost invariably precede the fall of every great civilization.

On the other hand, three of the supreme men of all times, three of the special favorites of God, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,

were all, in a sense, nomads. Sociologists would class them as belonging to the lowest order of civilized life. Clearly it is not by these standards that human culture can be convincingly measured.

But the Patriarchs were not full nomads, although in the Holy Scripture we generally find them spoken of as living under tents, both they and their household. When Rebecca came from afar to be the wife of Isaac she was brought "into the tent of Sara his mother."[2] Later, when her sons grew up, we hear that: "Esau became a skilful hunter and a husbandman, but Jacob, a plain man, dwelled in tents."[3]

Some simple form of sowing grain seems to have been common enough. While Isaac abode in Gerara he "sowed in that land, and he found that same year a hundredfold,"[4] but the Palestinian inhabitants filled up his wells. He dug wells in two other places, and each time quarrels ensued with the local herdsmen, who wanted no strange flocks in any of their pastures. In the next location he was successful; even so, he did not stay long, but soon sought out another spot to dwell. This time it was Bersabee, where Isaac erected an altar, "and pitched his tent and commanded his servants to dig a well," because the Lord had appeared to him there.[5]

Moreover, the blessing which the old man bestowed upon Jacob, and in particular upon his long line of descendants, is in the first place an agricultural blessing, and it was fulfilled in the most literal sense in future generations: "God give thee the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn and wine."[6] Surely the hand of the Lord was here.

The life of Jacob evidently did not differ much from that of his father. We are told where he built a house and "pitched tents" and called the name of the place Socoth, that is Tents.[7] His favorite son Joseph was sent to Sichem, where his brethren had been feeding their flocks, but found that they had wandered

[2] Gen. xxiv. 67.
[3] Gen. xxv. 27.
[4] Gen. xxvi. 12.
[5] Gen. xxvi. 23–25.
[6] Gen. xxvii. 28.
[7] Gen. xxxiii. 17.

on to Dothain, more or less in the old nomadic way. And yet in this very connection again we have that beautiful agricultural picture which formed part of the dream which Joseph innocently described to them: "I thought we were binding sheaves in the field: and my sheaf arose as it were, and stood, and your sheaves standing about, bowed down, before my sheaf."[8]

These references give an accurate outline of the kind of nomadic life the early Hebrews led. In the same way no doubt, the brothers of Joseph continued their pastoral pursuits when they settled in Egypt during the reign of those foreign invaders who themselves are referred to in history as the Shepherd Kings. This is strikingly brought home in the explanation given to Pharaoh: "The men are shepherds, and their occupation is to feed cattle: their flocks and their herds, and all they have, they have brought with them."[9] So, through Joseph's influence, they obtained the rich pasture lands of Gessen, in the Delta of the Nile. Pastoral pursuits were never abandoned, even when a thousand years later the early nomadic stage of Hebrew life was merely a cherished memory in which were enshrined the figures of many of the nation's greatest men and women.

The family life of the early Hebrew in his Arab tent was intimate and beautiful in many ways. The many delightful Scripture idyls of the Patriarchal period bear witness to the truth of this statement. Polygamy and slavery, which had been inherited from earlier days, were modified sc as to lessen materially their baneful consequences compared with the degrading practice of these institutions in the surrounding paganism. No doubt, there were hard times to be faced: seasons or years of drought, when no fodder or food could be found for beast or man; fierce encounters with wolf or lion; sudden calls to battle against invading robber clans. Such ever has been the life of man: bitter mingled with sweet, for here he has no stable habitation. The shepherd life of these men, with its ample freedom, its wholesome tasks in which all took part, its simple pleasures, its strong, close ties of home and society, and its deep religious faith, was a higher and nobler way of living than

[8] Gen. xxxvii. 7.
[9] Gen. xlvi. 32.

that followed by the courtier in Pharaoh's palace or the commercial magnate in his Babylonian mansion.

According to sociological lore the transition from pastoral life to the mechanical industries is bridged by an intermediate agricultural period. Such, we may agree, is normally the case. But a violent transition was forced upon the Hebrew families by the new Egyptian dynasty, which viewed with concern the strategic position held by them at Gessen, and the prodigious increase in their numbers due to a remarkably high birth rate. Some of them had doubtless already engaged in occupations connected with tilling the soil and others in mechanical arts, but suddenly, by royal edict, the entire male population was impressed into industrial service. In this enforced servitude they became bearers of burdens and builders of cities for the reigning Pharaoh. Under the eyes of hardened taskmasters, and under the urging of their rods, the Hebrews were forced to toil as serfs from morning until night. There was no Sabbath or Sunday in the calendar for the Egyptian laborer. Some few, with special gifts, may have been engaged in finer work intended to embellish the monuments of royal pride or add luster to an Egyptian ceremony.

The Israelites did their work none the less efficiently, although grudgingly and joylessly. Pharaoh's taskmasters successfully accomplished the industrial education of the Hebrew serfs, but purely in the royal interest, making the life of these men "bitter with hard works," and toil of every kind "wherewith they were overcharged."[10] It was all a forced development. No sooner had the tribes made good their escape, by the aid of God's intervention, than we behold them at once reverting to their former semi-nomadic life, but never did they revert, as a nation, to the passing phase of Egyptian industrialism.

The building of the Tabernacle in the desert which took place almost immediately upon their departure, was, as it were, a last memorial of their comparatively brief absorption in industry and art. It was in keeping with the wonted course of His Providence for God thus to make use of natural conditions in accomplishing His designs, while giving in addition His own help and inspira-

[10] Exodus i 14.

tion to these skilled workers who had received their training under Egyptian overseers. So was achieved a most consummate masterpiece of art whose mere description excites our wonder. Centuries later, in the much more advanced material civilization under Solomon, when the Israelites undertook the building of the Temple, men capable of performing the technical labor required for that purpose were no longer to be found among them and foreigners had to be called in. The generation of the skilled artisans had ended its days in the desert. After the subsequent years of war spent in the conquest of the land that Yahweh had bestowed on them so that they might establish themselves therein as His dedicated colony, the new generation gradually took to agriculture rather than industry and art, while it retained always a strong bent for pastoral occupations.

All that has been briefly sketched thus far, will be developed at length as this discussion proceeds. In anticipation of the difficulties, however, that would otherwise arise later, a preliminary understanding regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch had best be sought at once, since its various parts will be constantly quoted in the succeeding pages. In common with the great Catholic Scripture scholars, I have assigned all five parts of the Pentateuch, in point of time, to Mosaic days. This position, I am aware, is in pronounced opposition to the conclusions of many modern critics, but their argument fails to invalidate in any way the strong evidence on which Catholic scholars take their stand. The Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch, therefore, is here consistently accepted in the sense in which it is maintained within the Catholic Church, whose position will be made clear by the following decision of the Biblical Commission:

On the Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch

The Biblical Commission answers the following questions:

1. *Authenticity.*—Whether the arguments amassed by critics to impugn the Mosaic authenticity of the sacred books designated by the name Pentateuch are of sufficient weight, notwithstanding the very many evidences to the contrary contained in both Testaments taken collectively, the persistent agreement of the Jewish people, and constant tradition of the Church, and internal arguments derived from the text itself, to justify

the statement that these books have not Moses for their author but have been compiled from sources for the most part posterior to the time of Moses.

Answer: In the negative.

2. *Writer.*—Whether the Mosaic authenticity of the Pentateuch necessarily postulates such a redaction of the whole work as to render it absolutely imperative to maintain that Moses wrote with his own hand or dictated to amanuenses all and everything contained in it; or whether it is possible to admit the hypothesis of those who think that he entrusted the composition of the work itself, conceived by himself under the influence of divine inspiration, to some other person or persons, but in such a manner that they rendered faithfully his own thoughts, wrote nothing contrary to his will, and omitted nothing; and that the work thus produced, approved by Moses as the principal and inspired author, was made public under his name.

Answer: In the negative to the first part, in the affirmative to the second part.

3. *Sources.*—Whether it may be granted, without prejudice to the Mosaic authenticity of the Pentateuch, that Moses employed sources in the production of his work, i. e., written documents or oral traditions, from which, to suit his special purpose and under the influence of divine inspiration, he selected some things and inserted them in his work, either literally or in substance, summarized or amplified.

Answer: In the affirmative.

4. *Changes and Textual Corruptions.*—Whether, granted the substantial Mosaic authenticity and the integrity of the Pentateuch, it may be admitted that in the long course of centuries some modifications have been introduced into the work, such as additions after the death of Moses, either appended by an inspired author or inserted into the text as glosses and explanations; certain words and forms translated from the ancient language to more recent language, and finally, faulty readings to be ascribed to the error of amanuenses, concerning which it is lawful to investigate and judge according to the laws of criticism.

Answer: In the affirmative, subject to the judgment of the Church.

June 27, 1906.

These decisions, it should be noted, were not formulated until after a most exhaustive study of all that modern scholarship and research have been able to contribute to our subject. The same holds true of all the decisions of the Biblical Commission.

Chapter VI

HISTORY'S GREATEST LABOR LEADER

A commonplace of modern social literature and of our social histories is the interpretation under which the great Mosaic Exodus is represented as nothing more than a vast labor movement. To Moses himself is assigned a place among the world's foremost revolutionary leaders who are pictured as bravely fighting for the liberation of the proletariat.

On opening the Book of Exodus we are, without doubt, confronted at once with a prodigious labor situation, a vast scheme of exploitation and oppression, most bitter to the Hebrew serfs bowed beneath their intolerable burdens. So far we can all agree. But it is entirely unjustified to drag down the divinely chosen leader in one of the world's greatest religions as well as social events, who by the power of God alone was to free the Hebrew workers from their Egyptian bondage, to a level with the Marxian agitator. Even where more consideration is shown, such misinterpretations on the part of higher critics are obviously to be explained mainly by their fear of the supernatural. The Mosaic miracles, from their point of view, must necessarily be explained away as mythic narratives, whether based on economic facts or on other purely natural events.

That such an attitude should have been taken by Socialist writers who profess to see even in the sacred person of Christ no more than a precursor of the founder of modern Socialism, is not astonishing. Like Marx himself, many of them went so far as to repudiate Christ entirely. Ranging from ministers who denied the divinity of Our Lord to avowed non-Christian leaders, a large class of these men professed a doctrine that can best be made clear by a brief quotation taken from an early issue of the *Christian Socialist*. This publication sought to combine historic materialism with revealed Christianity, a process comparable to the effort of squaring the circle. The Rev. Wm. A.

Prosser, a Protestant minister, regularly contributed to this paper its "International Socialist Sunday School Lesson." Almost too blasphemous for quotation, the passage in question, which came from his pen, is given here as characteristic of an entire school of modern materialistic thought whose promoters may at times retain their name as Christians or even their titles as Christian ministers. Mr. Prosser exclaims:

> Moses, Jesus Christ and Karl Marx, three of the greatest revolutionists of human history! They were Jews by birth, but cosmopolitans by choice. They repudiated their consanguineous descent, to espouse the brotherhood of man. They are a trinity in one, one in spirit, mission and objective. . . . If we believe in them, as we claim, let us heed their call, enlist under their "blood-red banner" and march on together to the conquest of the world.[1]

Abhorring the materialistic excesses of these men, and equally regretting the attitude of others who seek to banish the supernatural, or at all events the miraculous, from history—well authenticated as any historic fact though it certainly is—we nevertheless need not hesitate to study the Scripture account of the Mosaic Exodus from its industrial side. Moses himself then stands forth to us in his impressive rôle as a labor leader, divinely guided and divinely aided. At the same time we may never lose sight of a still more transcendent fact, and this is that besides his divine call to free the Hebrew people from their bondage, he was commissioned also to confound the false Egyptian worship and to carry out above all things the far-reaching plans of God's Providence.

That the Israelites were victims of one of the worst systems of industrial exploitation is a mild statement. A labor crisis of the most ominous kind was facing the Hebrew chiefs. Viewed from the industrial angle they may now be regarded, in a sense, as labor leaders, in spite of the fact that they were held responsible by Pharaoh for the full performance of the work imposed by him on their fellow Israelites. When later this work became so excessive that it proved beyond human strength to perform it all, the shortage in the count of bricks was paid for with the stripes laid upon their backs by Pharaoh's taskmasters.

[1] March 14, 1912.

With sullen resentment, therefore, the Israelites bent to the hard toil put upon them with the express purpose to kill them off and reduce their numbers. When their numbers grew, instead, it was decided to order the relentless murder of all the male children newly born to them. Such methods were typical of Oriental paganism; for the Hebrews, we must remember, were but one of many foreign tribes whom the ambition of the Pharaohs may have exploited in a similar way.

Exactly how the work of exploitation here described was accomplished is all told us in the Egyptian monuments. There we can see as with the eyes of a contemporary the process of manufacturing the bricks, from the digging of the clay and the preparation of the mixture, to the carrying away and stacking of the completed sun-baked blocks. Over the workers, as in the old Assyrian days, stands the ubiquitous taskmaster with his uplifted lash. There was never any danger that he would spare the rod and spoil the worker. Of the treatment accorded the children of Israel by the Egyptians the sacred writer says:

> And they made their life bitter with hard works in clay, and brick, and with all manner of services, wherewith they were overcharged in the works of the earth.[2]

Among other tasks, the Israelites were probably forced to quarry heavy stones and drag them to their places. Doubtless the irrigation of the fields was the form of service in which particularly they were "overcharged in the works of the earth." The construction of the canals and drains was not exactly a pleasant task, but possibly the most dreaded occupation was the labor of irrigation itself. Gangs of unfree or forced workers were employed all day long under the eyes of their drivers in hoisting the Nile waters to the high-lying fields by a series of buckets, known as *shadufs,* and attached to long poles worked on axles. Of all the daily labor of the Egyptians this may well have been the most trying. Who can tell how many of the Israelitic serfs succumbed to this inhuman toil and the pitiless blows of their brutal Egyptian drivers? Human life counted for nothing in those early pagan days.

[2] Exodus i. 14.

Does human life count for anything more today where God is excluded from men's councils? The decree of Pharaoh ordering that every newly born Hebrew boy be heartlessly killed by the midwife; and that whoever escaped should be drowned like a rat by any of his Egyptian subjects, is paralleled by the more numerous crimes of modern paganism committed in the name of birth control.

The Egyptian industrialism too, it would seem, was equaled in all its diabolism in modern times during the long reign of economic Liberalism and Individualism. The time came, let it be recalled, when in the preceding case the Hebrew laborer actually looked back with regret to the "flesh pots" provided for him by his former masters and complained against those who had led him to freedom. "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat over the flesh pots and ate bread to the full."[3] Under the Mammonism that followed the destruction of the gilds and monasteries, many a man labored to the utmost and yet did not receive wages enough to be filled with meat and bread. A system of relentless profit-making ground down the toiler as heartlessly as ever did pyramid king or Egyptian Pharaoh in the days of Moses. Little children of their own nationality were driven as long and as hard by *laissez-faire* overlords as ever the brutal Assyrian with his rod urged on his captives of an alien race in the reigns of Sargon or Sennacherib.

Let us not be misled. Paganism is ever the same at heart, yesterday, today and tomorrow. It seeks gain and self-aggrandizement and cares not for the sufferings of others. It was a Catholic pulpit orator, who, when the vice of commercialism roused his ire, told the fine ladies of his day who came to hear him, that were they to wring out the silken garments that they wore the life-blood of women and children that went into their making would drip from them.

There is apparently little difference between what the modern rationalistic school of social historians and the Pharaoh of the Exodus thought of Moses and Aaron. Whatever the final and wiser conclusion of this monarch was at their initial interview

[3] Exodus xvi. 3.

with him, his opinion of these divinely appointed spokesmen appears to have been that they were labor leaders using religion as a cloak for their revolutionary schemes. They were stirring up an industrial unrest, he held, among the 600,000 Hebrew workers whom he was keeping at their unending tasks seven days a week, and as many hours a day as they could stand on their feet. If these men had strength enough left to trouble him about religion it showed that more work was needed to keep them busy. He would provide it, and he did. That was the Egyptian method of dealing with the complaints of their Hebrew serfs.

The story of Moses preceding the period of these parleys is sufficiently familiar. He was the "goodly child," found in a basket of bullrushes among the river sedge, by the daughter of the then reigning Pharaoh and committed by her to the care of its own mother, supposed to be a casual Hebrew nurse. So he came to be reared in the religion and tradition of the people of God. To this training was added in later years the lore and culture of the Egyptians.[4]

The decisive act in the life of Moses, after he had attained full manhood, it would seem, was the slaying of an Egyptian task-master who had beaten a Hebrew laborer. This is a most plausible interpretation. It appears to have happened almost at the first sight of the pitiless industrial bondages of his people. Such labor may well have been doubly odious to them, for centuries a shepherd race, because of their memories of the green fields and star-lit hills where they or their fathers had loved in days gone by to pasture the flocks. Torn from their homes and their loved occupations, nothing now remained to them but bitter tasks in clay and brick and all the manifold forms of drudgery imposed upon them. To this was added the brutality of their drivers that had probably occasioned the deed of Moses.

Social writers interpret his act according to their own mentality and so read the motives of the Hebrew leader in the light of their own theories. They applaud or condemn his deed as an illustration of the principles of direct action and an attempt to

[4] Exodus i. and ii.

achieve the liberation of the proletariat through methods of industrial violence. Again we are told that such theories had evidently captivated the mind of Moses in his eager and hot-headed youth, but that experience soon taught him the inexpediency of these measures. Precisely for the same reason, a national convention of Socialists in the United States rejected by a two-thirds vote the practice of violence as a solution of the industrial problem. It was on this issue too that Socialists broke apart into bitter antagonistic factions.

The truth seems to be that industrial theories had hardly disturbed the mind of the young and elegantly bred Moses who apparently had spent all his time in attendance at the highly refined Egyptian court. The Scripture implies that only at a later period did he realize the suffering of his brethren, probably when he paid his first visit to Pithom or Rameses, then, we presume, still under construction by them. The motive for his deed, at all events, is clearly given in the words of St. Stephen, spoken before his martyrdom, and preserved for us in the Acts of the Apostles:

> And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and in his deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And when he had seen one of them suffer wrong, he defended him; and striking the Egyptian he avenged him who suffered the injury. And he thought that his brethren understood that God by his hand would save them; but they understood it not.[5]

The time for God's glorious intervention, that was to confound the idols of Egypt and their worshipers, had not yet arrived. In the meantime, knowledge of the deed reached the ears of the King, and Moses was forced to flee for his life into the Sinaitic Peninsula.

Forty more years were to pass during which the Almighty prepared his heart, while he shepherded the flocks of Raguel, whose daughter, Sephora, he had taken to wife. At the close of this period the Pharaoh died from whose wrath he had fled. As both Thotmes III and Rameses II reigned for an exceptionally long period, either might in this regard have been the Pharaoh

[5] Acts vii. 22–25.

of the Oppression. The succeeding King, however, gave no respite to the Israelites. God therefore "heard their groanings, and remembered the covenant which he had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."[6]

The hour of their deliverance was indeed at hand, but it was not to be the result of a proletarian revolution, as it is now the fashion of social historians to represent this event. It was wrought out purely by the power of God using Moses as His instrument. So in later years the Almighty Himself reminded His people when He warned them to show consideration to their own servants and those subject to them, that they might not exercise the same tyranny as the Egyptian Pharaoh: "Remember that thou also didst serve in Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out from thence with a strong hand, and a stretched out arm. Therefore hath he commanded thee that thou shouldst observe the Sabbath day."[7] The very beasts even were not to be treated by the Israelites as the Egyptians had treated them.

"I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry because of the rigor of them that are over the works,"[8] were the words spoken to Moses out of the burning bush. There God gave to him the commission to stand before Pharaoh and to bring forth the children of Israel out of bondage. The impossibility of accomplishing this by mere human means was better known to no one else than to Moses.

There is no recorded instance of a successful revolution accomplished by slaves. Their repeated insurrections in ancient history all ended in failure and were punished with the most terrible cruelties. The same fate would without a doubt have awaited the Israelites. There was but one way in which their liberation could be accomplished, and that was as God now promised it: "I will stretch forth my hand, and will strike Egypt with all my wonders."[9]

How hopeless the task would have been for him if he had been left to his own resources Moses soon perceived when he

[6] Exod. ii. 24.
[7] Deut. v. 15.
[8] Exod. iii. 7.
[9] Exod. iii. 20.

made his first appeal to Pharaoh. In the name of the Lord God of Israel he implored the king to allow his Hebrew laborers to go free from work for just three days that they might worship their God in the desert. "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go," was Pharaoh's curt reply. "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, draw off the people from their works? Get you gone to your burdens."[10]

Under one aspect, therefore, Moses and Aaron were to him, what modern social historians also claim they were, foreign labor agitators, seeking to stir up an industrial revolution. To undermine their standing with their own people by proving how little they could do for them, Pharaoh had recourse to the highly successful method of imposing new burdens upon his Hebrew laborers. "You are idle," he said to those who pleaded that they were not able to accomplish the impossible task of gathering the straw as well as delivering the accustomed number of bricks. "You are idle, and therefore you say: Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord."[11]

As straw could now no longer be found, they were obliged to "gather stubble for straw." So Exodus, v. 12, should read in translation according to the original text. Not merely was the city of Pithom, on whose construction the Israelites worked, identified by M. Naville in 1883 with Tel-el-Maskhuta, but Scripture is again directly vindicated by the startling evidence here disclosed. The first bricks used in this undertaking were made of clay mixed with straw, subsequently reeds from the Nile were substituted—evidently the poorer material referred to in the Scripture text—and finally bricks of nothing but clay were employed. Such is the minute verification which modern research affords of the Scripture verse. Quoted entire it reads in the original: "The people were scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw." Under such circumstances we can readily understand that finally even this substitute failed the workers—possibly after the Israelites had already made good their flight—and so a very inferior brick, without straw or even stubble, had to be used.

[10] Exod. v. 2–4.
[11] Exod. v. 17.

Meeting with no mercy from Pharaoh and bloodily scourged by his taskmasters for not securing the impossible number of bricks, while through the whole land the people were gathering every stray reed for their tasks, the Israelitic labor officials finally turned in their bitterness of soul upon Moses and Aaron, accusing them of having brought all this new misery on the people. Pharaoh was forgotten as the source of all these evils and the whole blame laid upon the two heroic leaders who had so fearlessly espoused the workers' cause: "Because you have made our savor to stink before Pharaoh and his servants, and you have given him a sword to kill us."[12]

Pharaoh and his counsellors could now lean back complacently on their luxurious gilded couches and smile at the success of their policy. The discomfiture of the two noxious labor leaders, who had dared to ask a three days' release from work for the people that they might retire into the desert to worship the Lord, was complete. Who knows what further requests Moses and Aaron might have made? Instead, Pharaoh seems to have felt that he was well rid of them, and sure that they would never trouble him again. The workers themselves would see to that. Naturally speaking, he was perfectly right, but like so many of our social writers, his reckonings left almighty God entirely out of his count.

"Now thou shalt see what I will do to Pharaoh: for by a mighty hand shall he let them go," was the consolation that God gave to Moses. "Therefore say to the children of Israel: I am the Lord who will bring you out from the work-prison of the Egyptians, and will deliver you from bondage: and redeem you with a high arm and great judgment."[13]

At the advanced age of eighty years, without confidence in himself, trusting in the divine promise alone, Moses was to face Pharaoh again, not only once, but many times. The power of God was now visibly put forth. Rationalist writers, of course, explain away, as of purely natural origin, the series of miraculous plagues that rapidly followed each other. The manner in which the plagues appeared and disappeared at the word of Moses,

[12] Exod. v. 21.
[13] Exod. vi. 6.

the discrimination between the Israelites and the Egyptians, by the same plagues, which otherwise must have affected all alike, are sufficient proof of the miraculous nature of these visitations that served to confound the worship of the false gods of the Egyptians, as well as to force the liberation of the Hebrew workers.

Such plagues are historically known to have frequently visited the Egyptians at about that period. From this it does not follow that the events recounted in the Scripture were purely natural in their origin. We indeed behold God making use at His own will and in His own time of some of these same scourges as a sign of His visible interposition in favor of the children of Israel, but in such a peculiar way as to make His special intervention and His particular purpose plain beyond doubt.

In brief, the intelligent Christian believer well knows that the frequent occurrence of plagues, purely natural in origin, in no way conflicts with the occurrence also of like plagues, perhaps in most particulars entirely similar, although far more intense and which were further sent expressly by almighty God as a sign to confound the idol worship of the Egyptians and to liberate His children from the hands of their oppressors. To establish their miraculousness, it suffices that under such circumstances they were inflicted instantly and as instantly allayed for no reason, except God's command. Yet we may add, that the turning of the waters into blood could in no way be accounted for merely by the natural phenomenon known as the "red Nile," because of the fatal consequences to the Egyptians. Those who believe in God and in His inspired Word find no difficulty insurmountable in the Scripture miracles.

Moses, in fine, was the divinely commissioned leader of that mighty labor force of 600,000 workers whom he safely brought, amid signs and wonders, out of "the work-prison of the Egyptians." He may with right be spoken of, therefore, as the greatest labor leader in the world's industrial annals. But his power was of God alone, the sole Deliverer of the oppressed Hebrew serfs, among whom a proletarian revolution, led by a mere labor agitator, would in the natural course of events have been an unthinkable and impossible occurrence. Their own

mentality, as revealed in the sacred narrative, and the abject servility and servitude into which the first futile attempts of Moses before Pharaoh plunged them, make this abundantly plain. The merit of Moses consisted entirely in his courageous fidelity to the will of God. In this also must ever consist the merit of every true labor leader in a just industrial cause.

Chapter VII

WHO WAS THE PHARAOH OF THE EXODUS?

An important historical digression may here be permitted dealing with the question the reader may naturally have felt impelled to ask in this place: "Who, then, was the Pharaoh of the Oppression, and who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus?"

It was during the dynasty of the Hyksos, or Shepherd kings, as we have seen, that the Israelites settled in the rich Delta Lands of the Nile. According to Petrie these nomadic invaders ruled Egypt from 2098 to 1587 B.C., approximately, but few dates are certainly known in Egyptian history, least of all in this particular period. The time of their invasion has been set at a date as late as about 1677 B.C. The Hyksos at all event correspond to Menetho's Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties. During the Seventeenth they were gradually dislodged and were finally entirely displaced in the Eighteenth Dynasty. They were of Asiatic, and not improbably of Semitic stock. In fact, Professor Breasted tells us that scarabs of a Pharaoh, belonging to the Hyksos time, give his name as Jacob-her, or possibly Jacob-El, "and it is not impossible," he adds, "that some chief of the Jacob-tribe of Israel for a time gained leadership in this obscure age."[1]

It is fairly clear, therefore, that the Israelites were not likely to fare well under the Eighteenth Dynasty. This then would make it the natural place to look for the ruler of whom the Scripture says: "There arose a new king over Egypt, that knew not Joseph."[2] Because of his works of construction and his long reign, extending over fifty-four years, Thotmes III, seems best of all the Kings of this Dynasty to answer the description of the Pharaoh from whose face Moses fled, and to whose prolonged

[1] "History of Ancient Egypt", p. 181.

[2] Exodus i. 8.

reign the Scripture alludes when it says "Now after a long time the king of Egypt died."[3] His successor, Amenhotep II, or as the name is often written in its Greek form, Amenophis II, would then have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus, which would fix its date as some time during the fifteenth century. In view of the general haziness regarding Egyptian chronology itself I shall here refrain from seeking to assign the date still more definitely.

My own earlier convictions had favored the popular view according which Rameses II and Mineptah I are respectively the Pharaohs of the Oppression and of the Exodus. But the weight of the evidence available today gives to the choice of Thotmes III and Amenhotep II many advantages and it best accords with the general Scripture chronology. The building of the Temple of Solomon was, according to the Books of Kings, begun 480 years after the Exodus.[4] As great an interval approximately seems to be required for the many chapters of Hebrew history that transpired in between, as we may conclude from the Book of Judges. The date thus obtained would make the Exodus take place in the reign of Amenhotep II, shortly after the year which Egyptologists actually set for the death of Thotmes III. On this supposition, then, Scripture and Egyptology would be in perfect accord. Other theories are not, however, excluded.

Using our date for the Exodus to work from, the invasion of the Hebrew armies into Palestine would begin after the forty years of wandering in the desert, or at the very time, in the reign of Amenhotep IV, when certain contemporary documents from that country mention the conquering armies of the *Habiri* (or *Khabiri*), as overrunning the whole land, and taking city after city. In those same documents, the complete conquest of Palestine is predicted as a certainty, unless instant help were sent from Egypt. But such help was not then available, so that the success of these invaders is beyond doubt. Many Egyptologists and historians identify the *Habiri* with the Hebrews.

[3] Exodus ii. 23.
[4] I (3) Kings vi. 1.

The documents referred to as bearing on the *Habiri* invasion are the Tell-el-Amarna tablets. These contain the authentic letters written by the Governors of the various parts of Palestine to the Pharaohs then reigning in Egypt, who were still in control of that country. Thus the Governor of Jerusalem (Urusalim, as it was then called) sent the following urgent message:

> The Habiri are pillaging all the king's country. If the troops are here this year the land belongs to the King (my) master; if the troops are not here, the lands of the King, my master, are lost.

A postscript was added, addressed to the royal scribe whose duty it would be to read this letter to Pharaoh. It said:

> Tell this in clear words to the King, my master: "All the lands of the King, my master, are going to be lost."[5]

Here is no mincing of words. Other letters to the same effect exactly might be quoted, which came about the same time from the Governors in other parts of Palestine. If these *Habiri* of the tablets were not identical with the Hebrews of the Scripture, we need only ask: "Why then are they not mentioned among the many tribes of Palestine so minutely enumerated in Holy Writ?"

The famous stele of Mineptah I, the successor of Rameses II, is also best interpreted on the supposition that the Hebrews were already settled in Palestine instead of just fleeing from Egypt. In fact it seems to demand such an explanation and to allow of no other, since this Pharaoh clearly groups Israel, *Y-si-r'l*, with Chanaan, Ascalon and Gezer, all purely Palestinic names, and refers to them all by summing them up in the single term, Palestine. The following is the translation of the inscription in question:

> Wasted is Libya, the Hittite land is quiet; Chanaan is seized with every evil, led away is Ascalon; taken is Gezer. . . . Israel is desolated, his seed is not; Palestine has become a widow by Egypt.

If the Hebrews then were attacked by Mineptah's troops in Palestine itself, after the battles of occupation fought by Josue, Mineptah I can certainly not have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The forty years of wandering in the desert after the

[5] Ed. Knudizon, p. 286, 1, 56–64.

flight from Egypt precluded this, since Mineptah was exceedingly old on his accession to the throne and reigned but for a short period of years. It would follow then that Rameses II could not have been the Pharaoh designated as the Pharaoh of the Oppression. But all is readily explained if the flight took place under Amenhotep II.

Mineptah's boast that he had exterminated the Israelites is not of course to be taken seriously. The word "seed" might possibly be applied to their crops, but we willingly accept it as referring to their offspring. Not improbably the Egyptian expeditionary forces captured and destroyed some one of the more isolated and outlying Hebrew settlements. Such a feat was quite sufficient to inspire the Pharaonic vaunt, as any one acquainted with Egyptian inscriptions and their significance well knows.

The explanation that Mineptah attacked some Hebrew settlement made previously to the occupation of Palestine by the forces under Josue, is without warrant. The Hebrews are clearly localized by Mineptah as a powerful force in Palestine, so that by exterminating them there he would have exterminated them entirely: "Israel is desolated, his seed is not."

Yet there is apparently one strong Scripture argument, which at first glance might even seem conclusive and by many has been taken as the final proof that Rameses II must have been the Pharaoh of the Oppression. It is an argument to which personally I had been drawn to give assent, but for which I found a perfectly adequate answer can be offered. Here it is in brief. The Scripture definitely tells us that the Israelites were compelled by Pharaoh to build for him "cities of tabernacles, Pithom and Rameses."[6] The obvious conclusion would be that since Rameses was certainly named after Rameses II it could not have been built in the days of Thotmes III, long before the reign of Rameses. Yet this conclusion does not hold. The line of argument is invalidated by the fact that in Genesis, too, the name of Rameses is attached to the land of which a portion was given to Jacob many centuries before the birth of Rameses II. Thus we read:

[6] Exodus i. 11.

But Joseph gave a possession to his father and his brethren in Egypt, in the best place of the land, in Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.[7]

Clearly then, in one case as in the other, there may have occurred the same substitution of a modern for a more ancient name. This could easily be explained as the work of later days when the modern and recognized name would have replaced the obsolete and long forgotten specification of both the land and the city in question. From a marginal comment of some transcriber the new name could readily have passed into the text.

The possibility of such changes is expressly recognized by the Biblical Commission, as when it speaks of "certain words and forms translated from the ancient language to more recent language," in the decision "On the Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch."

In the present instance, I would observe, it is quite possible that Thotmes III, himself a great builder, may have begun the construction of the city named for Rameses, and that it may have been completed by the latter, two centuries later. He would then in all likelihood have given it his own name, or he might have renamed it after himself even if the city had been entirely built by Thotmes. Such methods were not uncommon in the days of the ancient Pharaohs. The more modern name could thus have been substituted at a later date in the Bible for the earlier one, as evidently happened in the other instance referred to above.

This view is strengthened rather than weakened by the reports, at the present writing, of "the discovery at Bethshean, Palestine, of an engraved stone monument to Rameses II, which records that he 'collected certain Semites' and made them build in his honor the city of 'Rameses-Meri-Amen,' on the Eastern Delta of the Nile." This would seem to confirm, like the Mineptah stele, the supposition that the Hebrews had already settled in Palestine, even in the days of Rameses II. Like Mineptah again, it would seem that he had sent troops to reconquer that country, which had once belonged to Egypt but was now in the hands of the *Habiri* or Hebrews. In that event, a number of captives

[7] Gen. xlvii. 11.

may readily have been carried off in the raid and set to work on their arrival in Egypt on the same task that had been left uncompleted by their forefathers in the days of Amenhotep II. It would be very natural for such a triumph to be recorded vauntingly on a monument left behind them by the Egyptian troops of occupation. A ruler like Rameses II would inevitably attempt to revenge the losses inflicted upon Egypt by the *Habiri* in the earlier reigns.

The reader may possibly expect to find here also a passing reference at least to the theory of Mr. Arthur Weigall, to which the widest newspaper publicity has been given. As reported, it presents the youthful Tutankhamen first as the Pharaoh of the Oppression and then, in a confused way, as Pharaoh of the Exodus.

In answer, we only need to point out that the short period of Tutankhamen's reign, from about 1358 to 1350 B.C., must necessarily exclude him from consideration as the Pharaoh of the Oppression, whose reign continued forty years after Moses slew the Egyptian. The clear Scripture statement, "Now after a long time the king of Egypt died" (Exodus ii. 23), evidently does not apply to the short-reigned Tutankhamen.

Nor can this prince have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus, since he was not preceded by a Pharaoh long lived enough to be the Pharaoh of the Oppression. His immediate predecessor, like himself, a son-in-law of Akhnaton (Amenhotep IV), had but a very short reign. Even the reign of Akhnaton himself, who preceded them, lasted only seventeen years, and so does not meet our requirements. It was during his days and those of his predecessor that the *Habiri* conquered Palestine. So we have good reason to conclude that the Exodus had taken place long before the reign of Tutankhamen, but frequent skirmishes may still have taken place between the *Habiri* and the Egyptians who sent marauding parties into their former Palestinian territories.

The plagues that occurred during the reign of Tutankhamen are in no way peculiar to that one period. The reference in an inscription to the employment of Asiatic slaves, at this time, in the reconstruction of the temples ruined by Akhnaton, in no

way identifies these Asiatics with the Hebrews of the Oppression. A better explanation of this reference has already been given in connection with two similar instances, one in the stele of Mineptah I, the other in the Palestinian monument of Rameses II.

In an article headed "The Egyptian World in the Time of Tutankhamen," Dr. H. R. Hall coincides with the position taken here that the Hebrews of the Exodus may credibly be identified with the *Habiri* or *Khabiri*, who had already overrun Palestine previous to the reign of Tutankhamen, and against whom the governors of that country begged help both from Amenhotep III (about 1411–1375 B.C.) and from Akhnaton. Of the situation that now developed Dr. Hall says:

> Palestine and Syria were in chaos. Wandering tribes, among them those Khabiri who have been credibly identified with the Hebrews, overran the land. . . . The Chanaanite chiefs and Phoenician princes who remained faithful were gradually borne down in the absence of help from Egypt, and at the end of Akhenaten's reign the whole country had fallen away from the king.
>
> In Tutankhamen's day the great prince Huy may represent himself on the walls of his tomb, as he does, bringing Semitic chiefs to offer tribute to his majesty, but we see that this can have been but a farce; the king's writ ran no farther than the coast of the Shephelah, probably.[8]

All this tends to confirm the position that the Exodus took place most probably shortly after the reign of Thotmes III, in the days of Amenhotep II. The accounts of occasional captures, thereafter, by the Egyptian forces, of groups of Asiatics, sometimes possibly including Hebrews, speak for themselves and hardly require further explanation. Nor need we consider here the theory of successive waves of emigration, since the Mosaic Exodus is one great racial migration.

We may add, in concluding this chapter, that the Mosaic authorship of the Book of Exodus is rather confirmed by the very fact that it does not mention the names, either of the Pharaoh of the Oppression or of the Pharaoh of the Exodus. At the time that Moses wrote, nothing was more familiar to the Israelites than these names, and nothing was more natural then to take them for granted, while it was evidently not the divine purpose to have them recorded.

[8] *Nature*, March 24, 1923.

So closes the story of the dark Egyptian servitude. Politically, industrially and racially, the story can be briefly summed up: When the Hyksos kings, fellow Asiatics, and not improbably of the same blood with the Hebrews, had been driven from power, great care was taken that the Hebrews themselves be not given the opportunity to aid or abet any future invaders. They were hated for their race and for their religion, and their numbers made them formidable. "Egypt for the Egyptians!" was the watchword of the Eighteenth Dynasty which came into power after this era of racial wars. The Hebrews, in their new status as forced laborers, were not merely the despised "foreigners," the "wops" and "hunkies" of that day and land, but they were also objects of general aversion. The Scripture clearly expresses this fact when it states: "And the Egyptians hated the children of Israel, and afflicted them and mocked them."[9] This nationalistic movement might naturally be expected to reach its climax in the days of Thotmes III, shortly after the country had been cleared of its foreign Asiatic invaders. When the evil was at its height God stretched out His hand to save His people.

In concluding this subject a word of explanation may be added regarding the transliteration of the Egyptian names that occur in this chapter. Probably some of the forms here used may have seemed unfamiliar to some readers more or less acquainted with the Egyptian history of the period in question. The fact is that hardly two authors will entirely agree in their spelling of Egyptian names. Possibly as many as a dozen different spellings could easily be found in use for the name of Mineptah I, and the most extreme forms would not be recognized by the ordinary reader as at all referring to the same Pharaoh. The reason is because Egyptian names and words in general are found in an abbreviated form. As a consequence we are often left to nothing more intelligent than a pure guess and can never arrive at certainty. This is particularly true in regard to the omitted vowels. Very relevantly W. Max Müller writes in the preface to his "Egyptian Mythology":

[9] Exodus i. 13.

It is quite as though the abbreviation "st." for "street" were well known to persons having no acquaintance with English to mean something like "road," but without any indication as to its pronunciation. Foreigners would be compelled to guess whether the sound of the word were *set*, *sat*, *seta*, *sota*, etc., since there is absolutely nothing to suggest the true pronunciation "street." A great part of the Egyptian vocabulary is known only in this way, and in many instances, we must make the words pronounceable by arbitrarily assigning vowel sounds, etc., to them.

The name of Tutankhamen, too, was spelled most variously until the newspaper world apparently came to a tacit agreement upon the subject as the name came to fill the first pages of our daily papers in successful competition with the names of Poincaré or Lloyd George, and bade fair to outlive even them in popularity. My own method has been to use the most simplified of the recognized forms where a definite spelling has not been as yet generally accepted.

Chapter VIII

WHEN GOD INSTRUCTED LABOR

One of the most memorable events in the history of labor is the occasion on which God Himself deigned to act as architect and designer, and instructed in His craft each of the skilled workers engaged in carrying out the divine commands. I refer, of course, to the building of the Tabernacle by the children of Israel, during the first year of their wanderings in the wilderness. God then appointed Beseleel, the son of Uri, to construct for Him that marvel of workmanship which is described with such loving detail in the Book of Exodus. Nothing is omitted by the inspired writer, down to the very snuffers of the lamps and "the vessels where the snuffings were to be put out, of the purest gold";[1] down even to "the hanging in the entry of the court, and the little cords, *and the pins thereof.*"[2] Nothing so slight but that it might be made worthy of the Lord by reason of purity of material, loving skill and loyal devotion, and so attract His divine regard.

The plan to be followed was no other than that shown to Moses on the mount. Craftsmen were not wanting to carry it out, men who had evidently well learned the various arts from the Egyptians. Aided by these skilled artificers in the Israelitic camp, and personally guided and inspired by the divine Architect, Beseleel, the master craftsman selected by divine choice, set himself to provide all that would be needed for the fitting worship of the twelve tribes during their long years of wandering. Referring to him and his force of trained workers, the Lord said to Moses:

[1] Exodus xxxvii. 23.
[2] Exodus xxxix. 40.

I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom and understanding, and knowledge in all manner of work, to devise whatsoever may be artificially made of gold, and silver, and brass, of marble and precious stones, and variety of wood. And I have given him for his companion Ooliab, the son of Achisamech of the tribe of Dan. *And I have put wisdom in the heart of every skilful man,* that they may make all things which I have commanded them.[3]

Not merely were divine plans given to be faithfully followed, but God, as we see, put wisdom into the hearts of the artificers, that they might worthily accomplish their great task and create surroundings of becoming dignity and splendor for the sacerdotal ceremonies and the public worship of the people. So also was the work carried out to the last detail:

Beseleel, therefore, and Ooliab, and every wise man, to whom the Lord gave wisdom and understanding, to know how to work in their crafts, made the things that are necessary for the uses of the sanctuary, and which the Lord commanded.[4]

Does this condescension seem unworthy of the Maker of heaven and earth? He who would think so has never meditated profoundly upon the life of the Word Incarnate and on the veiled glories of the Godhead hidden beneath the workman's trappings of Him whom men took to be the carpenter Joseph's Son, a Nazarean craftsman. That Tabernacle which the sons of Israel were to erect in the desert, that ark of the covenant and the oracle above it, whence God was to speak, were but foreshadowings of the Christian sanctuaries throughout the world, where the same Christ would dwell, veiled anew under sacramental species. Perhaps these truths may help us to understand and appreciate more fully the delight with which the Scripture lovingly dwells upon every minutest detail, in material and workmanship, as it recounts the building of the temple which God had planned and all the preparations made for those sacred services that were but figures and symbols of the great realities to come.

Gladly, both men and women, at the divine call, assembled even to excess their offerings of bracelets, earrings, vessels of

[3] Exodus xxxi. 3–6.
[4] Exodus xxxvi. 1.

gold and precious jewels, rich cloth and skins dyed in varied colors, metal of silver and brass, oil and spices and setim wood, and whatever valuable material was needed for the task. The multiplicity of arts now applied and the perfection manifested in them by these humble craftsmen may well arouse our wonder. And all this, be it remembered, proved not to be beyond their capacity almost fifteen hundred years before our Christian era.[5]

The structure erected was a portable temple, which was to form the center of the encampment, so long as the cloud of the Lord hung over the Tabernacle and the people were at rest, but could be taken up and carried in their midst when the cloud removed and the children of Israel again "went forward by their troops," six tribes going in advance and six tribes following after it.

In its general plan it consisted of a great *open court,* one hundred cubits in length and fifty in width, enclosed by pillars of setim wood set in bases of brass. The pillars, were crowned with silver capitals and garnished with silver plates. From them were suspended finely wrought curtains screening the court. The entrance was covered by a beautiful hanging of "twenty cubits of violet and purple, and scarlet twice-dyed, and fine twisted linen, with embroidered work." Such was the brilliant handiwork contributed by the Jewish women, as well as the men. Within the court, east of the entrance, was the altar of holocaust, covered with brass. Rings were attached to it, so that brass-plated bars could be passed through them and the altar borne on the shoulders of the men when the hosts of Israel decamped. Similar provisions were made for other weighty articles devoted to the temple service. There, too, was set the brazen laver, and beyond it was the Tabernacle proper, the dwelling of God.

The *Tabernacle* was divided into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Its entire structure consisted of a framework of boards, each ten cubits in length and overlaid with gold, the gold-covered boards fitting into sockets of silver at the base. They were then joined by mortises at the side, and golden rings were fastened to them, so that bars, covered with plates of gold, could be passed through the rings to steady the structure. It

[5] Exodus xxv–xxxi, xxxv–xl.

was further sustained by buttresses. A precious veil, of many colors, "wrought with embroidered work, and goodly variety," divided this structure into the Holy Place, or sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies. It hung suspended from four pillars of setim wood that had been overlaid with gold, their capitals being wrought of gold and their bases of silver.

In the part constituting the *Holy Place,* the sanctuary outside of the veil, was the altar of incense, overlaid with purest gold and a crown of gold round about it. There, too, was the six-branched candlestick, "of beaten work of the finest gold." From the golden shafts came out the branches, each with its cups and bowls and lilies. Seven lamps of gold were set upon the candlestick. In this same place was the table of shewbread, with its twelve loaves of proposition, always to be kept there, that were a figure of the Eucharist. Like all else it was rich in gold, with a ledge of gold, a polished gold crown, and over this a smaller crown of gold.

Behind the veil was the *Holy of Holies,* the sanctuary of sanctuaries. Into the Holy Place the priests might enter daily, but into the Holy of Holies the High Priest alone was permitted to set his foot, and even he only once in the entire year. Here, in this most sacred abode, was the ark of the covenant, overlaid with purest gold, within and without. Round about it was a golden crown, and over it the propitiatory, known also as the oracle or mercy seat. One either side of the propitiatory, this throne of the living God, were the two cherubim, of beaten gold, their wings outspread and covering the oracle, their faces turned towards it and looking one towards the other. Of this the Lord had promised Moses:

> Thence will I give orders, and will speak to thee over the propitiatory; and from the midst of the two cherubim, which shall be upon the ark of the testimony, all things which I will command the children of Israel by thee.[6]

If we enter the Tabernacle with the priests and look about us, the walls at first present to our eyes one unbroken gleam of gold, with a line of silver at the base, except where, straight

[6] Exodus xxv. 22.

before us, the rich and multi-colored curtain divides the tabernacle, or where the walls of gold are clouded by the blue wreaths of wafted incense or softly reflect the light of many lamps. But as our glance slowly follows a drift of incense curling upward from a golden vessel, a new revelation awaits us. It is the marvel of the immense curtains or tapestries, skilfully inwrought, beautiful in violet, purple and scarlet twice-dyed, diversified with embroidery, that form the ceiling of this wonderful house of God. Protecting the tapestries from without, are still other curtains, woven of goats' hair, which, in turn, are covered with the dyed skins of rams. Lastly, presented directly to the inclemencies of the weather, warding off the showers of rain and the beatings of the storm, are violet covered skins that complete the Tabernacle roof.

But more remarkable still were the vestments of Aaron, the Hight Priest, in which he ministered before the Lord, attended by his sons, who were arrayed in fine linen tunics, "and girdles and miters for glory and beauty." Thin plates of gold were drawn into threads, and then twined with the woof of "violet and purple and scarlet twice-dyed, and fine twisted linen" to make the ephod of the High Priest. In each side of this was set an onyx stone, "closed in gold" and graven with the names of the children of Israel, six names on one stone and six on the other, "the work of an engraver and the graving of a jeweler." Similar to the ephod in workmanship was the rational of judgment, with embroidered work of diverse colors. In this were four rows of precious stones. The first row contained a sardius, a topaz and an emerald; the second a carbuncle, a sapphire and a jasper; the third a ligurius, an agate and an amethyst; the fourth a chrysolite, an onyx and a beryl, all set in gold, and on each was inscribed the name of one of the twelve tribes, that Aaron might bear them on his breast before the Lord.

All of violet was the tunic of the ephod, with woven border about the neck, and pomegranates of varied colors at the feet, and little bells of purest gold between the pomegranates, that the sound thereof might be heard as the High Priest went in and out of the sanctuary in the sight of the Lord. His tunic was bound by a rich girdle of embroidered work. On the head of

Aaron was the miter, resplendent with its plate of sacred veneration, of purest gold, fastened with a violet fillet, and on the plate, hanging down over the forehead of the High Priest, was engraven this dedication: "The Holy of the Lord."

By divine prescription there was made also "the holy oil of unction," blending in definite proportions the chosen spices of myrrh, and cinnamon, and calamus, of cassia, and olive, "an ointment compounded after the art of the perfumer." With this the Tabernacle and its sacred vessels, and Aaron and his sons were anointed, but no man might presume to use that ointment for his own delight, since it was sacred to the Lord. None other supply might be made of the same composition. So too a special incense was to be composed, in equal weight, of stacte, onycha, galbanum and frankincense, "well tempered together and pure," reserved to the Lord alone, that an odor "worthy of sanctification" might ascend unto Him. "What man soever shall make the like, to enjoy the smell thereof, he shall perish out of his people."[7] And there was also given the purest oil of olives, beaten with a pestle, "that a lamp may burn always in the Tabernacle of the testimony, without the veil that hangs before the testimony."[8]

What a glory and glow and richness of colors! What a wealth and profusion of silver, and gold, and precious stones; of violet and purple, and scarlet twiced-dyed! What a sweetness of incense and ointments compounded of richest perfumes and spices, all the arts of the perfumer employed in the service of God! What a preciousness and conscientiousness of work, even to the smallest details, to the little chains, the hooks and rings of gold in Aaron's vestment. Nothing that adds a gracious touch to the ceremonial of worship is deemed too insignificant for mention in Holy Writ.

Special assistance was here given by God to skilled labor, working out His designs; yet it is true also that in the service of religion labor has everywhere attained to its highest reaches and found its greatest perfection and loftiest inspiration. The Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages could never be repeated today because each humble craftsman who toiled at them was

[7] Exodus xxx. 37.
[8] Exodus xxvii. 20, 21.

an artist skilled to give his expression to his own ideals in glass, wood, stone or metal. His soul went into his work, his joy and skill and devotion, until every detail was instinct with the life of its maker, and the towering minster rose as the voice of a people magnifying God in a mighty song of homage and of praise, a song full of gladness and glory, a civic symphony that was not meant to die upon the empty air. Mere skill and scientific workmanship might strive to imitate but never could reproduce these wonders of art, the handiwork of generations of humble but happy laborers.

If we wish to create a great and distinctive national art we must again become a deeply and sincerely believing people. Even pagan religious art often contained at least broken reflections of the truth and blurred remembrances of primal revelation. But the full consecration of labor and art, combined in one, and their sublimest achievements can be attained again only in the return of the nations to the sole worship of God in spirit and in truth. This, the Church—One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, the same today as when built by Christ upon Peter, with the divine promise that error should never prevail against her—has preserved for the world through all the centuries. Such is the important social lesson of the Tabernacle built in the wilderness, after the model shown on the mount.

Chapter IX

THE MOSAIC AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

Guided and inspired by God, Moses planned a great national existence for the Hebrew tribes. At the foot of Mount Sinai they contracted an alliance by which the great law-giver intended to make of them an invincible federation of the people of Yahweh, for under this one name, "He Who Is," all the tribe at length came to invoke the sole true God. Their future happiness or woe was to depend on the measure of their fidelity to Him.

The work of Moses was continued by his divinely appointed successor, Josue, almost equally remarkable in his own capacity as military leader. Confidence in him, combined with a strong faith in Yahweh, Lord of hosts, whose aid was so visibly manifested in their behalf, welded together the tribes in the conquest of the promised land. This union lasted until the occupation of the soil had been permanently accomplished.

The change of the Israelites from the nomadic to the agricultural stage took place far more rapidly than might normally have been expected. Centuries earlier, their forefathers, the Patriarchs, had wandered through the same regions, frequently within sight of the walled cities and highly cultured fields of the Chanaanite inhabitants, yet they continued to cling tenaciously to their own nomadic life. Their descendants doubtless followed the same pastoral occupations in Egypt and lived in a rather similar way, although some may have settled more permanently on the soil, while others probably sojourned longer in one spot and devoted themselves more to raising crops along the shores of the Nile than the Patriarchs had ever done in Palestine. Moses evidently could count upon an intelligent understanding of agricultural values and an appreciation of them when he drew for the wandering tribes in his care the striking contrast between the farming qualities of the land they had left and the new land which Yahweh was to bestow upon them:

For the land which thou goest to possess is not like the land of Egypt, from whence thou camest out, where, when the seed is sown, waters are brought in to water it after the manner of gardens.

But it is a land of hills and plains, expecting rain from heaven. And the Lord thy God doth always visit it, and his eyes are on it from the beginning of the year unto the end thereof.

If then you obey my commandments, which I command you this day, that you love the Lord your God, and serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul, he will give to your land the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your corn, and your wine and your oil; and your hay out of your fields to feed your cattle, and that you may eat and be filled.[1]

Here it is evident that the next stage in the development of the Hebrew race is clearly outlined by almighty God. They were now to live under circumstances and conditions where they would naturally become an agricultural people, with His blessing of fruitfulness upon their fields so long as they would be faithful to Him. A simple country life would best insure the fidelity of their allegiance to Him. To hasten this development, or social evolution as we may call it, God gave instructions to Moses in regard to the apportionment of the land that was to be given to them. And first a careful census was taken of all the men twenty years old and upwards. The final result, together with the divine regulations for the division of the soil, is thus set down in the Book of Numbers:

This is the sum of the children of Israel, that were reckoned up, six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty.

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying:

To these shall the land be divided for their possessions according to the number of names.

To the greater number thou shalt give a greater portion, and to the fewer a less. To everyone as they have now been reckoned up, shall a possession be delivered; yet so that by lot the land shall be divided to the tribe and families. Whatsoever shall fall by lot, that shall be taken by the more or the fewer.[2]

The location where each tribe was to dwell, in brief, would be assigned to it by lot. The amount of territory, however, after the general location was thus determined, would be in proportion to the size of the tribe that drew the particular lot.

[1] Deut. xi. 10–15.

[2] Numb. xxvi. 51–56.

When the tribes had been located, each within its definitely circumscribed limits in the land they were still to conquer, it is estimated that the allotment made to each man was somewhere between sixteen and twenty-five acres. Agricultural occupations did not preclude the continued care of flocks and herds, but it is clear that a great social change was about to take place in the exterior life of the race.

Because their land was situated on the eastern shore of the Jordan, Ruben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasses received their portions from Moses himself on condition, however, that they would cross the river with their brethren and take part in the battles still to be fought before the remainder of the promised land could be occupied. Not until the long struggle was ended and what the Lord had promised was fulfilled, did the other tribes receive their allotments of land in the country west of the Jordan. Thereafter, a traveler on his way up from Bersabee in the south would visit in turn Simeon, Juda, Dan, Benjamin, Ephraim, the remaining half tribe of Manasses, Issachar, and then might cross the fields of Nephtali, Zabulon and Aser lying side by side. Finally, his journey would end, in the extreme north, at the spot where another portion of the tribe of Dan, which had made an attack single handed upon a pagan town, built on its ruins the city we now know as Dan-Laish. "From Dan to Bersabee," therefore, came to be the expression used colloquially to describe the extent of the Jewish landed possessions.

No separate territory was set aside for the Levites. Yahweh Himself was to be their inheritance. But in forty-eight designated cities, distributed through the different tribes, they were to be given homes, and definite sections in the suburbs of these cities were permanently allotted to their families for the pasturage of flocks and herds. They were not included in the figures of the general census prepared for Moses, but all the Levite males, from one month old and upward, were counted by themselves, and were found to number 23,000: "For they were not reckoned up among the children of Israel, neither was a possession given to them with the rest."[3] In a special way, their

[3] Numb. xxvi. 62.

time belonged to Yahweh, and being devoted to Him and His service they were not required to work the land, but were to be well supported and provided for.

The great principle underlying the entire agricultural constitution divinely given through Moses to the children of Israel was that the land bestowed upon them in reality belonged to Yahweh and not to them: "Because it is mine, and you are strangers and sojourners with me."[4] Hence, no one could permanently dispose of it. The utmost care was also taken to prevent its transfers from tribe to tribe. The decision of Moses in the case of the daughters of Salphaad was to be law also for all of Israel: "Let them marry to whom they will, only so that it be to the men of their tribe. Lest the possession of the children of Israel be mingled from tribe to tribe."[5] The men, too, might not seek wives in other tribes. The agricultural law which Yahweh gave to His people further contained its own land reform clauses by which evils and unfairness would in due time be rectified.

Once in the possession of a family, the land could never be alienated. It might nominally be sold, but in the year of jubilee complete restoration to the original owner was always to be made. It could, therefore, in reality be leased only.

The amount of the sales price varied according to the number of years still to run before the jubliee, which was every fiftieth year. A farm sold forty years before this date would bring exactly forty times the price that would be paid thirty-nine years later. In the latter case the purchaser secured only the equivalent of a one year's lease, for, says the Scripture: "In the year of the jubilee all shall return to their possessions."[6] What was more, the purchaser was obliged to restore the land even to a relative of the needy man who had been forced to sell his family's patrimony, and the land was at any time to be given back when the original owner might find himself able to redeem it at the due price. The Mosaic law was plain indeed in every detail. Thus we read:

[4] Levit. xxv. 23.
[5] Numb. xxxvi. 6, 7.
[6] Levit. xxv. 13.

If thy brother being impoverished sell his little possession, and his kinsman will, he may redeem what he has sold. But if he have no kinsman, and he himself can find the price to redeem it, the value of the fruits shall be counted from the time when he sold it, and the overplus he shall restore to the buyer, and so shall receive his possession again.

But if his hands find not the means to repay the price, the buyer shall have what he bought, until the year of the jubilee. For in that year all that is sold shall return to the owner, and to the ancient possessor.[7]

As a natural means for stabilizing still further this divinely planned agricultural system, not only admirably suited to its own time and circumstances, but also highly suggestive to the social student of our own day, no usury or interest charge whatsoever was to be allowed. That proviso enabled these ancient husbandmen to escape the great credit handicap which is still the overwhelming problem of the modern farmer. It was by foreclosure due to unpaid interest on agricultural loans that property otherwise would be most likely to change hands, and the independent farmer became a tenant or a serf. Not merely, therefore, was loan to be given when asked for by a needy brother, but the law expressly declared: "Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor exact of him any increase of fruits."[8]

Usury might, however, be taken from the stranger. Sufficient for us, of course, without other explanation, is the inspired declaration that this dispensation was expressly from the sole absolute owner of all material goods. He it was who permitted the Israelites in their flight from Egypt to carry off with them the treasures of the Egyptians, after the unremunerated and bloody labors so long imposed on them. Not Pharaoh alone, but all the Egyptians had joined in the oppression of the children of God and all were punished. Similarly, in considering His permission granted the Hebrews to take interest from the strangers we must remember that the latter doubtless exacted usury to the full from the Israelite whenever he was constrained to borrow from them. This would leave the Hebrew at a great disadvantage. The divine law is thus stated in Deuteronomy:

[7] Levit. xxv. 25–28.
[8] Levit. xxv. 31.

Thou shalt not lend to thy brother money to usury, nor corn, nor any other thing; but to the stranger. To thy brother thou shalt lend that which he wanteth, without usury, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all thy works in the land which thou shalt go in to possess.[9]

This, then, was the divine form of usury that would be given in return for the loan made to a brother: the blessing of Yahweh. In general the Israelite was instructed to be indeed a lender "to many nations," but a borrower "of no man."[10]

Still a further protection was given the agricultural worker which was destined to aid in the complete evolution of the nomad into the full-fledged farmer—for evidently it was the will of God to guard His people religiously and economically if only they would conform to His fatherly desires in their regard. It was the law of the Sabbath year:

Six years thou shalt sow thy field and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and thou shalt gather the fruits thereof; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath in the land, of the resting of the Lord. Thou shalt not sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. What the ground shall bring forth of itself thou shalt not reap; neither shalt thou gather the grapes of the first fruits as a vintage; for it is a year of rest to the land.[11]

Whatever grew in that year, when the land was to recruit its strength, might be consumed by any one, whether he were the owner himself of the field, vineyard and orchard, or merely his servant, or even a total stranger. It was, in brief, to be all left for the consumption of any who might need it to satisfy a passing want. No debt could be collected in that year, but again the stranger was excepted in this regard. Once more a reason can easily be assigned in as far as he was not bound by the Sabbatical year and so would doubtless raise his crops and might have the wherewithal to pay his debt. His fields, it is true, would be exhausted by this process in course of time, while God's blessing would rest on the field of the Hebrew loyal to Yahweh and doing His bidding.[12]

In the possession of his house, too, which the Hebrew farmer

[9] Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.
[10] Deut. xv. 6.
[11] Levit. xxv. 3–5.
[12] Deut. xv. 1–3.

might own in the neighboring village, ample protection was accorded him. Even if compelled to sell his modest dwelling, the possession of it could not be withheld from him and his family permanently: "It shall be sold according to the same law as the fields. If it be not returned before, in the jubilee year it shall return to the owner."[13] The city-dweller might also redeem his house, but only within the space of a single year after the sale. If not redeemed within that time, the buyer and his posterity were to possess it in perpetuity. Every advantage, therefore, rested with the Hebrew farmer.

But the possessor of the farm, himself thus protected, was to take care not to harden his own heart. He, too, must remember that the one true owner of his land was Yahweh, and, therefore, minute and yet important regulations were to be observed by him. Into all these, it is not possible to enter here. It will suffice to quote but one:

> When thou reapest the corn of thy land, thou shalt not cut down all that is on the face of the earth to the very ground, nor shalt thou gather the ears that remain. Neither shalt thou gather the bunches and grapes that fall down in the vineyard, but shalt leave them to the poor and the stranger to take. I am Yahweh your God.[14]

No wonder, then, that under the influence of this special divine Providence the evolution of the already greatly transformed nomad into the skilled and enthusiastic farmer took place far more rapidly than otherwise could have been expected. Nevertheless, not a few years passed before it was entirely wrought. The period in which this occurred is known as the time of the Judges, for which 300 years can be allowed on the supposition that the Exodus occurred under Amenhotep II.

The definite allotments of land must necessarily have been a powerful transition factor, yet former herdsmen and shepherds could not have been converted by it at once into capable farmers. Doubtless, they learned much in the course of years from the Chanaanites who still had many strongholds in the land, and from Chanaanitic slaves whom they had captured in battle or otherwise acquired. In the course of time, the Is-

[13] Levit. xxv. 31.
[14] Levit. xix. 9, 10.

raelite came to love the soil which now generously yielded up to him its oil and wine and wheat, its fig and pomegranate, its sweet almonds and rich fruit of the palm. But it was only after steady and long continued industry that he could realize in its fulness the meaning of the words used by Moses to describe the land of promise:

> A land of wheat and barley, and vineyards, wherein fig trees and pomegranates, and oliveyards grow; a land of oil and honey. Where without any want thou shalt eat thy bread, and enjoy abundance of all things; where the stones are iron and out of its hills are dug mines of brass.[15]

After the transformation was completed and the charm of the soil at last had won the heart of the nomad, he now surely should have kept that heart purely for its Maker, from whom all these blessings flowed. But too often the allurements of the false nature gods, worshipped in every high place and under every shady tree by the neighboring Chanaanite won him away from the pure Mosaic Yahwehism. All the remaining history of the Hebrew race was to be a confirmation of the great law that failure or success would be conditioned for it infallibly on its fidelity to Yahweh.

How far the divinely given agricultural constitution here described was actually carried into effect during the subsequent centuries, is difficult to say. Although saints were never wanting among the chosen people, yet the Israelites constantly departed from the worship in truth and spirit of the one sole God, and as constantly Yahweh their true Shepherd, sought to lead them back by the judgments their sins brought upon them. Through foreign invasion, through plague, drought and famine, the Hebrew farmer was warned that he must return to the Lord his God.

Powerfully describing such a visitation the Prophet Joel exclaims: "That which the palmerworm hath left, the locust hath eaten; and that which the locust hath left, the bruchus hath eaten; and that which the bruchus hath left, the mildew hath destroyed."[16] What such a plague meant we can best understand from his picture of a locust invasion. He beholds them first appearing on the distant heights, "a numerous and strong

[15] Deut. viii. 8 9.
[16] Joel i. 4.

people, as the morning spread upon the mountain," and thence they descend with dreadful destruction upon the standing corn, upon the fields of wheat and barley, upon the vineyards heavy with grapes, upon the orchards of fig and palm, of apple, pomegranate and olive, upon the city and houses of men, leaving nothing but mourning, death and devastation in their path. Follow the course of that locust army:

Before the face thereof a devouring fire,
And behind it a burning flame;
The land is like a garden of pleasure before it,
And behind it a desolate wilderness,
Neither is there any one that can escape it.

The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses,
And they shall run like horsemen.
They shall leap like the noise of chariots
Upon the tops of mountains,
Like the noise of a flame of fire,
Devouring the stubble,
As a strong people prepared to battle.
At their presence the people shall be in grievous pains,
All faces shall be dark as a kettle blackened in the flame.

They shall run like valiant men,
Like men of war they shall scale the wall;
The men shall march every one on his way,
And they shall not turn aside from their ranks.
No one shall press upon his brother,
They shall walk every one in his path,
Yea, and they shall fall through the windows,
And shall take no harm.

They shall enter into the city,
They shall run upon the wall,
They shall climb upon the houses,
They shall come in at the windows,
As a thief.

At their presence the earth trembles,
The heavens are moved,
The sun and moon are darkened,
The stars have withdrawn their shining.[17]

[17] Joel ii. 3–10.

So in the things of the earth was the Hebrew farmer blessed or punished as he chose to remember or forget Yahweh, from whom alone all the earth's abundance came. Yet God's mercy was always ready to pardon and to bless anew. That, in brief, is the entire history of the Hebrew people.

Chapter X

FROM THEOCRACY TO ROYALTY

Politically the unity of the Israelitic tribes ceased with the passing of their great leaders, Moses and Josue. Each tribe, thereafter, followed its own particular interests, with ordinarily but little cooperation among them. Jealousies and strife at times further divided the scattered groups. A Hebrew resident in the territory of a tribe not his own remained a *ger,* and alien, no matter how long he or his forebears may have settled there. The great confederation of the people of Yahweh, which Moses had formed and which Josue led to its glorious victories, was completely dissolved. There still remained, of course, the unity of Faith, race and tradition, but no effective political bond existed during the entire era of the Judges.

The title of "Judge" must not here be understood in its modern sense. The Hebrew word *Shophet,* so translated, had a far larger meaning, and might best be rendered as "one who makes justice triumph." The Judges were popular liberators, divinely inspired to undertake the rescue of their people from an intolerable situation. When this had been performed they would often drop back into private life. So long as the crises lasted they were virtually dictators, as we would say now, although not in the sense of the usurpers of our day, for their rule was based on a divine vocation, and was assumed by the universal consent of the people.

Their leadership, however, extended over only a single tribe or a confederation of tribes which might be defending itself against a common foe. In the notable case of Samson there was no public position of any kind, much less that power to settle disputes which was part of the duties of leadership of the Judges in Israel. His exploits were purely personal and dependent entirely upon the power of God. Yet he deserved the title of Judge, since through him justice triumphed over Israel's foes.

How difficult it was at first to achieve even a temporary union among the various autonomous tribes is sufficiently evidenced by the history of Debbora. That wonderful Mother and Prophetess of God's people was also a Judge in Israel, in the fullest sense of the word, since to her the children of Israel came up "for all judgment" where she sat under the palm tree named after her on Mount Ephraim.[1] Yet when she called upon the various tribes to unite for the war against Sisara, the tribe of Ruben stayed at home because it was divided in its views on the campaign. Its "courageous men," as she tauntingly records in her powerful canticle of victory, remained "to hear the bleating of the flock." Nor was a finger moved to help her by Galaad, Dan or Aser:

> Galaad rested beyond the Jordan,
> And Dan applied himself to ships,
> Aser dwelled on the sea shore,
> And abode in the havens;
> But Zabulon and Nephtali offered their lives to death
> In the region of Merome.[2]

With them fought also Ephraim and Benjamin, Issachar and the clan of Machir, all of whom are extolled as partakers in the glorious victory, when the stars, "in their order and courses fought against Sisara."[3] But no blame is cast by her upon Juda, Simeon and Levi, whose participation seems not to have been required in that signal battle when the kings of Chanaan were routed,

> Where the chariots were dashed together
> And the army of the enemies was choked.[4]

Under such popular leaders as Gedeon, Debbora, Jephte and Samuel, partial and temporary cooperation was therefore already achieved in times of great crisis. Danger from without was constant and the tribes, singly or in groups, were repeatedly in conflict, now here, now there, with the surrounding pagan nations

[1] Judges iv. 4, 5.
[2] Judges v. 17, 18.
[3] Judges v. 20.
[4] Judges v. 11.

or also with new invaders. The most formidable foes proved to be the powerful and aggressive Philistines, who threatened to seize all the possessions of the Israelitic tribes and become the self-constituted masters of Palestine.

Under such circumstances the idea of having a king of their own constantly gained ground among these independent units. As they now formed a theocracy united by the bonds of a common Faith and a common origin, they sought for a third bond in a royal political union. We see the longing for a united monarchy plainly in the offer of the kingship spurned by Gedeon:

> And all the men of Israel said to Gedeon: "Rule thou over us, and thy son, and thy son's son, because thou hast delivered us from the hand of Madian." And he said to them: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, but the Lord shall rule over you."[5]

Yet as time went on, the longing for a king of their own was to assert itself ever more strongly. We find the men of Sichem making Abimelech king over them, but their experience was not a happy one. He was the first local monarch of a Hebrew tribe, and in his ambition as bloody as Macbeth. In the age of Samuel the demand for royalty had finally become too strong and universal to be successfully resisted. In vain the aged Judge tried to put off the monarchist pleaders. In bitterness of heart he heard their appeal for a king. Keenly they made him realize that he was looked upon by these men as belonging to an epoch fast passing away.

The man favoring monarchy is now regarded as the "reactionary" in politics. Then the man opposed to royalist propaganda was looked upon as the "reactionary." So popular sentiment goes by turns. Democracies follow absolute monarchies and ancient republics give way to new empires. Even the high concepts of American freedom entertained by the signers of the Declaration of Independence have now been practically relinquished by an influential section of the American people for the promotion of a system of legislation and centralization midway between the ideals for which Washington fought and the oppressive restrictions of autocratic government.

[5] Judges viii. 22, 23.

In the last years of Samuel, the old democratic ideals that were to have been realized under a sacred theocracy had, in the popular mind, grown stale and unprofitable. The people must by all means have a king, even like all the other nations round about them. There was a glamour in that name. Then, too, they believed, this was the best way to present a united front against their powerful Philistine enemy. Yet by their own fault alone were they disunited. Had they been true to Yahweh, Lord of hosts, they might under Him have been welded into a confederation which no power of that ancient Eastern world could have overcome. But if they preferred their own course, God would let them try it out. However, He made clear to His great servant, in bidding him yield to their importunities, that it was not Samuel, but Yahweh Himself, whom they were rejecting.

Yet even then, before taking this final step to carry out the divine command, the last of the Judges was inspired to tell his people in clearest terms what this choice would imply for them. There was no mincing of words. "This," he said, "will be the right of the king that shall reign over you":

> He will take your sons, and put them in the chariots, and will make them his horsemen, and his running footmen to run before his chariots.
>
> And he will appoint of them to be his tribunes, and centurions, and to plough his fields, and to reap his corn, and to make him arms and chariots.
>
> Your daughters also he will take to make him ointments, and to be his cooks and bakers.
>
> And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your best olive-yards and give them to his servants.
>
> Moreover, he will take the tenth of your corn, and of the revenue of your vineyards, to give to his eunuchs and servants.
>
> Your servants also and handmaids, and your goodliest young men, and your asses he will take away, and put them to his work.
>
> Your flocks also will he tithe, and you shall be his servants.[6]

Not a pleasant prospect! Yet the free tribesmen had but to look about and behold how all these details were verified in the Oriental despotism around them. Nor were they to wait many years before the words of the aged Samuel would truly describe the actual conditions under Solomon in his blighted old age, and under Solomon's foolish son, Roboam.

[6] 1 Sam. (1 Kings) viii. 11–17.

The Judgeship of Samuel was a time when such a royalistic program would most naturally become a live political issue. Never, since the days of Moses and Josue, had the tribes acted together on so large a scale, nor had any one man ever held such power. Externally the transition from the rulership of Samuel to that of a king was consequently not as startling as might else have been expected. Essentially, however, it constituted one of the greatest changes in all history, for it displaced a theocracy established by God Himself in favor of a merely human monarchy. Yahweh, who had been the sole immediate ruler of His people, still remained, indeed, their Supreme Ruler, but a political monarchy had replaced His immediate kingship. "Hearken to the voice of the people in all that they say to thee," the Lord spoke to Samuel, "For they have not rejected thee, but me, that I should not reign over them."[7]

The first and second kings of the new monarchy were men of heroic mold. Saul was an imposing figure who might well fire the imagination of any people and appear to materialize in his person the monarchic ideal, although unfortunately he was to prove unfaithful. David was every inch a king. The monarchy, to be sure, could never replace the theocracy, but that monarch at least could be spoken of as a "theocratic king." God's will was the rule for his government of the nation. During all the long succession of Hebrew kings there were but few of whom the Sacred Scripture could say that they "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." Such a king was Ezechias and such was Josias, who both "walked in the ways of David," and did "according to all that David . . . had done."[8]

The great work of empire building, begun and carried on by Saul and David, was consolidated by the brilliant Solomon. The development of the monarchy progressed with marvelous rapidity. God did not withhold His help from the new order as long as the hearts of men remained true to Him. Thus was the perversity of human wills turned to account that the divine plan might be perfected, just as through the perfidy of Christ's enemies the great stage was to be set for the supreme work of the Redemption

[7] 1 Sam. (1 Kings) viii. 7.
[8] 2 (4) Kings xviii. 3; xxi. 2.

of mankind. David himself was to be a type of the Messianic King.

Yet the labor of empire building, which Solomon carried to its height, was in turn to be undone by his own folly and infidelity. Hardly had his eyes closed amid the fading splendors of his kingdom than Juda and Israel were split in twain, never to be reunited under a single sovereignty. Yet the system of royalty lasted until these kingdoms themselves came, each in its turn, to the violent end the Prophets had predicted as the punishment for the idolatries alike of kings and people. "A bitter and an evil thing" it was for them to prove false to the Lord their God.

Chapter XI

FORCED LABOR UNDER SOLOMON

The great constructive works of Solomon afford an interesting side-light on social and labor conditions among the ancient Oriental nations at the climax of their cultural life. In reading the Third Book of Kings and the Second of Paralipomenon, or according to Protestant nomenclature, the First Book of Kings and the Second of Chronicles, we may at first be surprised that in the erection of the Temple as well as of his own palaces, Solomon largely depended upon the forced labor of subject races.

Viewed from the ideal Christian standpoint, and considered apart from its own time, place and circumstances, this institution of forced labor under Solomon is undoubtedly repugnant to our mind. But we must not forget that it was practised in a far more humane manner than elsewhere among the nations of that day. This point should not be underestimated. Due to the weekly Sabbath rest, religiously observed; to the many prescribed holidays when all labor must cease; and most of all to the firm insistence in the inspired books upon the dignity of human nature, labor conditions among the Jews differed essentially from those in the other Oriental empires. The blessed weekly day of repose and leisure brightened by the laborer's cheering and uplifting communion with his God before whom he was the equal of his master, was a thing unknown to the toiler in the stately cities of Babylonia, Assyria or Egypt, nor was he protected there by the safeguards of every kind that in Israel religion threw about the worker, whether bond or free, whether Hebrew or stranger.

It is well, too, to recall here the fact that forced labor is not peculiar to ancient history. We ourselves have witnessed its employment both during and after the World War. Recourse, in particular, has been had to it only too frequently in their dealings with less cultured races by the civilized nations of

modern time, often under the most barbarous and inhuman conditions. And they have vied and fought with each other to secure or retain the highly prized privilege which has been euphoniously named, "bearing the white man's burden."

Even the United States has not been free from blemish in regard to forced labor in our twentieth century. In all such modern instances we find Western nations relapsing, not into methods characteristic of Judaism, but into the ways of ancient paganism from whose deplorable social policies Christianity, wherever its teachings were heeded in spirit and in truth, had liberated the world.

True, there was forced labor also in the Middle Ages, and that of a systematic kind. Yet the stable and confidential relations that existed between villein and lord of the manor made it a very different thing from recent or ancient practices of this kind. To be sure, these conditions were not ideal, and yet there was at least a historic reason for them. In a certain sense a true mutuality existed due to the reciprocal duties between master and man, in the protection given and the service rendered. But at no time, we admit, was the Christian ideal fully realized in an entire civilization. It was approached, however, far more closely in the medieval gilds than in any other period, before or since.

To return, then, to our subject. The first great work of Solomon was the building of the Temple, which took place in accordance with the word which the Lord had spoken to David his father: "Thy son, whom I will set upon the throne in thy place, he shall build a house to my name."[1] Gold and silver in abundance, brass and iron, onyx stones and all manner of precious materials had already been prepared by David for this task, and the people had contributed with rejoicing vast treasures for the house of the Lord.

In the four-hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of Egypt, the building of the Temple was begun. Placing the Exodus shortly after the death of Thotmes III these figures present no difficulty. It is worthy of note that whereas the Israelites, in their desert wanderings, had been able, with divine assistance, to construct the Tabernacle, they were

[1] 1 (3) Kings v. 5.

now unable even to undertake the building of the Temple without the aid of the Phoenicians. Long years of warlike activities had lessened their skill in the arts of peace. For the cutting of the cedar trees of Libanus, for the craftsmanship of the masons, for the artistic execution of the marvelous work in gold and brass, they could not rely upon men of pure Jewish blood, nor even upon the people subject to them and requisitioned for forced labor.

"Give orders that thy servants cut me down cedar trees out of Libanus, and let my servants be with thy servants," Solomon asked of Hiram, King of Tyre, and in return he promised: "I will give thee the hire of thy servants whatsoever thou wilt ask, for thou knowest how there is not among my people a man that has skill to hew wood like to the Sidonians."[2]

That the Jews themselves performed none of the servile work connected with the construction of the Temple and the royal palaces will later be made clear. This was done by the forced labor of the tribes subject to Israel under Solomon. For the men sent by Hiram, King Solomon gave, according to the Book of Paralipomenon, "twenty thousand cores of wheat, and as many cores of barley, and twenty thousand measures of wine, and twenty thousand measures of oil." This amount of provisions would seem to have been rendered yearly. Since the work upon the Temple and the king's house together continued for twenty years, it was apparently given for that entire time. These men, too, were either forced laborers or else simply royal slaves. They were let out for hire by their lord according to the custom of the times. In Babylonia the hire of a slave was considerably cheaper than that of an ox, as the clay tablets recording such transactions clearly indicate.

Other workmen, too, were supplied by the Phoenician king. From Tyre came the chief artificer and designer, "the son of a widow woman of the tribe of Nephtali, whose father was a Tyrian." Side by side with the masons of Solomon, the masons of Hiram worked, hewing the costly stones for the foundation of the Temple. In every way Hiram was prepared to assist. When the twenty years were completed he was paid in kind, receiving

[2] 1 (3) Kings v. 6.

twenty cities in the land of Galilee. Although disappointed because he had not received more, he apparently was too good a business man to allow his feelings to rupture friendly relations, for immediately he again furnished Solomon with a vast sum of gold.

No less thorough a man of business was King Solomon. The transactions between these rulers were conducted on a tremendous scale, because each knew that he could profit by the other. The same mutual advantages existed in dealings between their subjects. The Jews, as an agricultural people, found a market for their produce in Tyre, and the Phoenicians, as merchants and manufacturers, supplied a thousand articles of luxury and art to the splendid city of Solomon and his luxurious court. Thus it was that the workmen of Tyre were employed at the same tasks with the Jews and the Judaized tribes.

To understand the nature of the task undertaken by Solomon in the building of the Temple and the adjoining structures we must compare it with some such vast enterprise in modern times as the construction of the Panama Canal. Horses were not used for the transportation of materials by any of the Oriental nations, but the trees from the forests and the rocks from the quarry were carried or drawn along by men. This accounts for the many thousands of laborers needed "to carry burdens." All this material, it may be added, was carefully measured and cut before transportation, so that it needed only to be set into its definite place. Hence neither ax nor hammer was used at the Temple site itself.

There is a brief account in the Third Book of Kings giving with sufficient detail the organization of King Solomon's labor forces, which was apparently kept intact during all the twenty years required for the completion of his enormous work. The first figures refer exclusively to the children of Israel, who were treated with very special consideration:

> And King Solomon chose workmen out of all Israel, and the levy was of thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Libanus, ten thousand every month by turns, so that two months they were at home; and Adoniram was over this levy.[3]

[3] 1 (3) Kings v. 13, 14.

We are next told about the men who were assigned for the heavy and laborious tasks connected with the enterprise. There is no mention here, we note, of any return to their families after a stipulated period of service:

> And Solomon had seventy thousand to carry burdens, and eighty thousand to hew stones in the mountains; besides the overseers who were over every work, in number three thousand and three hundred, that ruled over the people and them that did the work.[4]

To resolve the perplexities these figures have caused Scripture students I may add that the 150,000 laborers just mentioned were clearly not Israelites, but all were men drafted for this work among the subject races. They were placed under more than 3,000 overseers who, as in the case of the Israelites in Egypt, were likewise taken from the subject tribes. Speaking of the entire number the text says:

> And they were found a hundred and fifty-three thousand and six hundred. And he set seventy thousand of them to carry burdens on their shoulders, and eighty thousand to hew stones in the mountains: and three thousand and six hundred to be overseers of the work of the people.[5]

But what of the special levy of the children of Israel? These are not mentioned at all in the passage just quoted, since they were not to do the difficult labor, but were rather to conduct the enterprise. Thirty thousands Israelites, as the former text states, were chosen to serve in relays of ten thousand each, so that every man might return to his home for two months after his one month's tour of duty. Thus Solomon carefully guarded against any heavy task being assigned his own people; but the proselyte, as a member of a subject race, was not treated as socially on a level with the Jew, although the religious benefits of the Faith he may willingly have accepted were not denied him. The word "proselyte," however, in our versions of the Old Testament, does not necessarily signify a convert, but the original Hebrew word often merely means a stranger.

The whole labor situation is clearly summed up in the ninth chapter of the Third Book of Kings, where we are told that

[4] 1 (3) Kings v. 15, 16.
[5] 2 Paralip. ii. 17, 18.

Solomon made tributary the descendants of "all the people that were left of the Amorrhites, and the Hethites, and Pherezites, and Hevites, and Jebusites, that are not of the children of Israel." But of the children of Israel themselves we are told: "Solomon made not any to be bondmen, but they were men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and captains, and overseers of the chariots and horses."[6]

An additional finishing touch to the vast labor picture which the Scripture unfolds to us is the information conveyed in the same chapter that there were 550 chief officers who presided over all the works of Solomon.

Whether the full force of men we have now accounted for was actually engaged during the entire seven years consumed in the building of the Temple does not seem to be clearly indicated, but is generally taken for granted. They seem likewise to have worked on during the remaining thirteen years required for the construction of Solomon's own palace, which consisted of the house of the forest of Libanus; the porch of pillars; the porch of the throne, wherein was the seat of judgment; the king's private palace, surrounded by a court; and the house of the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken to wife.[7]

In the details we have described regarding the Temple of the Old Law that noiselessly rose from its base without sound of ax or hammer, St. Augustine sees a beautiful figure of the building of the Church of Christ. The multiplicity of the Gentile tribes and races, besides the children of Israel, engaged in Solomon's magnificent House of the Lord, are like a foreshadowing of all the nations of the earth who shall participate in the one and only Church of the New Testament that has for its builder the new Solomon, Christ Jesus. But in particular the vast multitude of proselytes, as compared with the small number of the Hebrews who labored at this great work, is taken to be symbolical of the divine mercy of the true Solomon who shall reign over the new Jerusalem in which are gathered together all tribes and peoples, as the Prophet Isaias had foreseen. But while the nations came as bondsmen to the building of the old Temple,

[6] 1 (3) Kings ix. 20–23.
[7] 1 (3) Kings vii.

they are now gathered in the freedom of Christ, before whom there is no distinction of Greek or Roman, bond or free, but all are equally members of one and the same mystic body, whose Head is the long-promised Messias. Well then might the Prophet exclaim of His coming:

> Arise, and be enlightened, O Jerusalem: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and a mist the people: but the glory of the Lord shall rise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light, and kings in the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thy eyes round about, and see: all these are gathered together, they are come to thee: thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side. Then shalt thou see, and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged, when the multitude of the sea shall be converted to thee, the strength of the Gentiles shall come to thee.[8]

How even the glorious Temple itself, the palace and pillared porches and all the splendors of the royal city vanish into insignificance at the coming of the King of kings whose scepter is love, and whose reign is the reign of mercy, though He shall rule with a rod of iron the proud of heart!

The building of the Temple and all the marvelous structures grouped around it represents only a portion of the vast constructive plans of Solomon. Besides creating a great army of chariots and horsemen he built up cities and fortified the land. Of these works the Scripture gives an enumeration and then adds: "All the towns that belonged to himself, and were not walled, he fortified, the cities also of the chariots, and the cities of the horsemen, and whatsoever he had a mind to build in Jerusalem, and in Libanus, and in all the land of his dominion."[9]

Here, therefore, was a scheme which required vast amounts of labor for its execution, systematically carried out, with all the burdensome part of the work accomplished by bondsmen. The fleet, too, which he built on the shore of the Red Sea must have engaged the services of a great number of men. Apart from the laborers furnished by Hiram, the others belonged to the tribes already enumerated. Concerning them almighty God,

[8] Isaias lx. 1–5.

[9] 1 (3) Kings ix. 15–19.

the sole Master of life and death, had given command that their cities be destroyed utterly, lest the abominations practised therein should likewise mislead the children of God. There is no reason why God should not thus have carried out His just judgment and have so guarded the Faith which He gave: "Lest they teach you to do all the abominations which they have done to their gods, and you should sin against the Lord your God."[10] Solomon himself was not to turn out proof against these solicitations.

Rightly understood, we have here in reality an example of God's great mercy. The Book of Wisdom makes this fact clear, admitting us into the secrets of the Divine Providence in its dealings with these Gentile tribes. There, in reference to these very events, we read:

> For those ancient inhabitants of the holy land, whom thou didst abhor, because they did works hateful to thee by their sorceries, and wicked sacrifices, and those merciless murderers of their own children, and eaters of men's bowels, and devourers of blood from the midst of consecration, and those parents sacrificing with their own hands helpless souls, it was thy will to destroy by the hands of our parents, that the land which of all is most dear to thee might receive a worthy colony of the children of God.[11]

Such we know were only some of the horrible orgies practised by these people in the worship of Baal and his impure goddesses Baale (Astarte) and Aschera. The punishment meted out to them was not therefore as much worthy of note as the Divine mercy which the Scripture reveals in describing the efforts of God to move them to repentance. For God willed not to destroy them outright for the sins and the contaminations they would bring upon Israel, but first sent upon them destructive insects ("wasps" in the Scripture version, such perhaps as the Tsetse fly in Africa) that by these lesser tribulations He might still save their souls:

> Not that thou wast unable to bring the wicked under the just by war, or by cruel beasts, or by one rough word to destroy them at once; but executing thy judgments by degrees, thou gavest them place of repentance.[12]

[10] Deut. xx. 18.
[11] Wisdom xii. 3–7.
[12] Wisdom xii. 9, 10.

While God knew how deeply ingrained their malice was, His grace was not wanting to save even them, but "their thoughts"—as the Scripture text that now follows should be translated—"would never be changed," *i.e.*, their own perversity would resist the divine admonitions. It is not implied, however, that individuals of these tribes would not be converted. Such instances are specifically mentioned. God's goodness shines forth when we perceive His plans:

> For thou lovest all things that are,
> And hatest none of the things which thou hast made . . .
> But thou sparest all, because they are thine,
> O Lord, who lovest souls.[13]

God's mercy towards these Gentile tribes, that as a body so terribly abused His graces, is in fact definitely pointed out to the Israelites as an encouragement to hope in Him in their own turn:

> Thou hast taught thy people by such works, that they must be just and humane, and hast made thy children to be of a good hope, because in judging thou givest place for repentance for sins.[14]

Hence while a sharp distinction is drawn between the Israelites and their subject races, the treatment which they received in the building of the Temple or in other services must not be confounded with the treatment which under similar circumstances would have been accorded them by other dominant nations in that Oriental world, almost three thousand years ago. The spiritual privileges of the religion of Yahweh, the one true Faith of their day, whose benefits these might all enjoy, moreover carried with them, also, important economic advantages, such as would have been granted in no other contemporary civilization.

The culmination of earthly splendor had been reached in Solomon. Wisdom, combined with riches and glory, were his as the gift of the Lord. While the time had not yet come for the more purely spiritual religion of the New Law, when the throne of the New Solomon was to be the wood of the cross, and poverty, suffering and humiliation were to be the riches of

[13] Wisdom xi. 25, 27.
[14] Wisdom xii. 19.

His saints, God was lavish with temporal blessing. "Juda and Israel," says the Scripture in reference to King Solomon's reign, "were innumerable, as the sand of the sea in multitude: eating and drinking, and rejoicing. And Solomon had under him all the kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines, even to the border of Egypt: and they brought him presents, and served him, all the days of his life."

Twelve governors were appointed to provide provisions for the king and his household, each furnishing the necessaries for his table one month in the year. "Moreover, all the vessels, out of which King Solomon drank, were of gold: and all the furniture of the house of the forest of Libanus was of pure gold: there was no silver, nor was any account made of it in the days of Solomon." The last expression is of course to be understood as an hyperbole. His wealth poured in from the tributes that were paid him by the subject tribes and the lavish gifts that after Oriental fashion were offered him: "And every one brought him presents, vessels of silver and gold, garments and armour, and spices, and horses and mules every year."[15]

Riches, too, streamed in most profusely through the channel of trade. The fleet which he built was manned by his servants and by Phoenician sailors, who "had knowledge of the sea." One trip to "Ophir" brought to King Solomon 420 talents of gold, and once in three years his navy set sail with the ships of Hiram to Tharsis, "and brought from thence gold, and silver, and elephants' teeth, and apes, and peacocks." All this wealth poured into the royal treasury to be lavishly expended on buildings and fortifications, on his army and the court.[16]

It was a national and not merely a royal prosperity that Juda and Israel enjoyed for a long period wherein all the citizens were prosperous, in their own degree, no less than their king. He had made friends of the Egyptian and Tyrian. There was peace and plenty on every side. As the Scripture beautifully expresses it: "And Juda and Israel dwelt without fear, every one under his vine, and under his fig tree, from Dan to Bersabee,

[15] 1 (3) Kings x. 21, 25.
[16] 1 (3) Kings ix. 26, 27; x. 22.

all the days of Solomon."[17] Only when his heart was turned from God did he begin to oppress his people, and the storm clouds of destruction gathered on the dark horizon.

To sugar coat in any way the system of forced labor in ancient or modern times has not been my purpose. But a just impression of this system as in practice under Solomon cannot be obtained if we fail to take due account both of the general and the particular historic circumstances of the case. Certainly, no comparison existed between the Egyptian servitude of the Israelites and the forced labor exacted by Solomon under the humane restrictions which revealed religion constantly placed upon the Hebrew master, were he king or subject. It is quite true that this religion did not violently revolutionize the existing social system, then universally accepted throughout the world. Such was not its function. It contented itself with preserving against all aggression the human dignity of the laborer, made, no less than the imperial Solomon, to the likeness of his Creator and created for the same sublime destiny. The perfect achievement of this high end was placed as surely within the reach of the lowliest proselyte laboriously hewing stone in the mountain, as within that of the king dispensing justice from his ivory throne. The labor of the former might not infrequently help to his salvation while the riches and power of the latter might lead to his eternal undoing.

Ancient history has one great lesson to teach. It shows by contrast what Christianity has meant for the world. Even the agnostic and infidel who least acknowledge it, still owe to its influence all that is noblest in their lives and their surroundings. It has changed the face of the earth by the power of the Spirit of God. Such were the blessed effects of the coming of Christ.

[17] 1 (3) Kings iv. 25.

Chapter XII

SERVITUDE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Servitude among the Hebrews differed essentially from slavery as it was ordinarily carried on among the pagan nations. This may seem a strong assertion. Yet it is true. The Israelite never failed to recognize human dignity as part of the status of man or woman under bondage, but they were simply chattels to the pagan. The Roman law classed them with stock or stone or beast.[1] They had neither physical, moral nor religious rights that a master was bound to respect. Their virtue was no more sacred to him than their lives. Hence a certain unconscious felicity exists in the use of the word *servant*, throughout the English version of the Scriptures to denote the unfree Hebrew laborer, in place of the harsher term, *slave*, attached to which are connotations that in no way applied.

No Biblical mention of servitude occurs in the history of prediluvian days. The first use of the Scriptural expression "servant" is found in the words of Noe: "A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."[2] But we become more familiar with the word after Abraham appears upon the scene, bringing with him the remnants of Babylonian customs and traditions. He was then seventy-five years of age, and had evidently prospered exceedingly in the rich plains about Haran. It is not, therefore, surprising that he should have acquired also a goodly number of bought and born servants, and "men-servants and maid-servants"[3] were included in his household.

As the nation that sprang from him grew and developed, it was not able to cast off entirely the traditions of the past. They were moreover kept alive by the influence of the surrounding

[1] *Pro nullis, pro mortuis, pro quadrupedibus.*
[2] Gen. ix. 25.
[3] Gen. xii. 16.

paganism. The Old Law did not attempt to terminate at a stroke the institutions of slavery and polygamy, then universal throughout the world. Time and people were not ripe for it. Abraham himself had not been commanded to leave them behind, when in answer to the divine call he went forth from the pagan land of his birth and the idolatrous house of his father. The law contented itself with forbidding by the strictest provision the inhumanity and immorality which everywhere else were the inseparable companions of these practices. While Christ, at His coming, did at once restore the primitive unity of the marriage bond, even Christianity did not seek by any direct attack or revolt to root out slavery. What bloody strife could not have accomplished was brought about far more surely by the gradual influence of Christian doctrine in the hearts of men.

The particulars of the servitude that existed in the early patriarchal days are only incidentally detailed for us in the Scriptures. The rule of the patriarch over his household was that of a father as well as of a master. No instance is on record where one of them gave away or sold his servants to another. They occupied a place in his household next to his free wife and children. The positions of trust and confidence to which they might rise is beautifully illustrated in that lasting example of loyalty and devotion, the Damascene servant of Abraham, Eliezer. The story of how he was sent forth with his master's caravan of precious gifts into far-off Mesopotamia, and how he found and brought back with him a wife for his master's son, is one of the most delightful in the Sacred Books. Not so smoothly ran the course of Agar, the Egyptian handmaid, whom Sara had probably received from Pharaoh. Yet the punishment visited upon her when she proudly despised her mistress was certainly not unprovoked. Then she ran away, but only to return again. The rest of that story illustrates incidentally the evils of polygamy, which, like divorce, was only permitted in order to avert still greater evils.

Definite legislation regarding servitude was immediately to follow transition into the Mosaic period. Exodus, Deuteronomy and Leviticus contain a series of divinely given laws that are not intended to change the existing social institutions, but to

humanize them. They were designed to secure for every man and woman under bondage all religious benefits, and guard them against the harshness and indignity of pagan slavery. The one thing necessary, then as now, was the service of God and the salvation of the soul. To safeguard and facilitate this end, we repeat, was, and is, the first function of religion.

From the very beginning of Hebrew history we find the great religious rite of circumcision applied without exception, by divine command, to every male child. Special provision is made to exclude no unfree member of the household: "He that is born in the house, as well as the bought servant shall be circumcised, and whoever is not of your stock."[4] Thus the covenant of God was written in the flesh of master and servant without any distinction of wealth or poverty, of bond or free, of race or blood. The boon that this implied for the unfree servant in the household, whether Hebrew or alien, cannot be overestimated. Never henceforth could he be looked upon as a mere chattel existing solely for another's advantage. He was not only recognized as his master's equal before God, but was endowed with the same religious rights. The argument that Job applied to himself was written in the conscience of every Israelitic master, and constituted the strongest safeguards of his servant:

> If I have despised to abide judgment with my man-servant or my maid-servant, when they had any controversy against me, what shall I do when God shall rise to judge? And when he shall examine, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him also: and did not one and the same form me in the womb?[5]

Thus true religion remains the one great humanizer in the world, the one constant and unfailing protector of the weak, the one voucher for the brotherhood of all mankind. Yet we can never hope to find anywhere on earth the complete fulfilment of the religious ideal even under Christianity, and much less could we expect to find it under what was a type and symbol of better things to be.

In the study of the Old Testament servitude a distinction

[4] Gen. xvii. 12.
[5] Job xxxi. 13–15.

must be made between the Hebrews and the non-Hebrew servant in the household. The present chapter confines itself exclusively to legislation concerning the fellow Hebrew.

There was a saying among the latter-day Jews that: "He who buys a Hebrew servant buys a master." The divine legislation provided that the Hebrew servant could not be put at any degrading tasks and that he must be treated with all the courtesy shown to a free laborer and even to a guest. Most important of all, his term of servitude could not be extended beyond the period of six years. The six creative "days" or periods during which God worked in the formation of the world and all that it contained were thus evidently recalled, giving an additional sacredness to the man or woman engaged in six years of work, to be followed by a lasting Sabbath of freedom from bondage. Thus reads the Book of Exodus:

> If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve thee: in the seventh he shall go free for nothing. With what raiment he came in, with the like he shall go out: if he have a wife, his wife also shall go out with him.[6]

If he entered servitude as an unmarried man and then received a wife from among his master's handmaids his release could not affect her state or anticipate her own time of release. But if he wished, he might freely choose to remain, saying: "I love my master and my wife and children, I will not go out free."[7] He was thus secured against being turned out, and protected in his family rights.

For various reasons indeed he might be loath to leave a household in which he found himself kindly treated and even cherished for his fidelity and affection. In such a case a lasting sign was to be given, conformable to Oriental manners. This would constantly remind both master and servant of the obligation they had solemnly assumed towards each other, through health or sickness, even unto death:

> But if he say: "I will not depart," because he loveth thee, and thy house, and findeth that he is well with thee; thou shalt take an awl, and

[6] Exod. xxi. 2, 3.
[7] Exod. xxi. 4, 5.

bore through his ear in the door of thy house, and he shall serve thee forever: thou shalt do in like manner to thy woman servant also.[8]

How thoroughly the spirit of brotherhood was to be preserved between rich and poor, between master and servant, is made still more clear from the following regulations laid down in the Book of Deuteronomy:

There will not be wanting poor in the land of thy habitation, therefore I command thee to open thy hand to thy needy and poor brother, that liveth in the land. When thy brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to thee, and hath served thee six years, in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free; and when thou sendest him out free, thou shalt not let him go away empty but shalt give him for his way out of thy flocks, and out of thy barn-floor, and thy wine-press, wherewith the Lord thy God shall bless thee. Remember that thou also wast a bond-servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God made thee free, and therefore I now command thee this.[9]

That this injunction of liberality might be made doubly strong we find it repeated again in the same chapter: "Turn not away thy eyes from them when thou makest them free: because he hath served thee six years, according to the wages of a hireling: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work thou doest."[10] It may be noted that it is implied here, as well as in other passages, that the Hebrew servant also drew a wage, and so might be able with his own means to free himself before the six years were over. Generosity to the departing servant is not merely urged by the divine Legislator, but is rewarded by Him with a definite sanction, the blessing of temporal prosperity. The servitude, therefore, of the Hebrew servant should be defined, not as slavery, but as a six-year lease of his labor power to his present employer.

Finally, the Book of Leviticus introduces a new legislative feature in favor of the Hebrew servant. It is the regular recurrence of "the year of jubilee." With the return of every fiftieth year all Hebrew servants were to be unconditionally freed. They were to go out with wife and children. Thus the law reads:

[8] Deut. xv. 16, 17.
[9] Deut. xv. 11–15.
[10] Deut. xv. 18.

If thy brother constrained by poverty sell himself to thee, thou shalt not oppress him with the service of bond-servants; but he shall be as a hireling and a sojourner; he shall work with thee *until the year of the jubilee*, and afterwards he shall go out with his children, and shall return to his kindred and to the possession of his fathers, for they are my servants, and I brought them out of the land of Egypt; let them not be sold as bondmen; afflict him not by might, but fear thy God.[11]

According to Jewish Doctors, a Hebrew servant was freed also when his master died without male heir in the direct line of descent. It is evident, therefore, that full advantage was taken of every opportunity to restore him to freedom.

But how, it will naturally be asked, did it come to pass that the free Hebrew could fall into a state of servitude? We are here face to face with an ancient custom which, at first glance, may seem startling to the modern reader, yet which is easily intelligible when explained. Servitude was voluntarily entered upon as a means of escaping poverty and its consequences. Interpreted according to the Mosaic laws, it differed little, as we have seen, from a six-year labor contract. It implied no degradation, but in time of dearth and trouble gave assurance of shelter, clothing and food to the Hebrew worker and his family. Together they became members of some wealthier household, freely putting themselves at the disposition of the master under whose roof they now dwelt, yielding up for the time their freedom and their working power. When the six years were completed they went forth to begin their independent life anew and, it was to be hoped, under happier circumstances.

There was just one way in which a free Hebrew could be forced into servitude without his full consent, and that was when restitution could not be made by him in case of theft.[12] Modern authors frequently mention debt as a second cause of compulsory servitude, but there is no adequate proof of this in the written law, as the passages quoted are merely those in which a man sells himself because of his impoverished state.[13] That sales for debt, however, actually did take place, cannot

[11] Lev. xxv. 39–43.
[12] Exod. xxii. 3.
[13] Lev. xxv. 25–39.

be questioned. But various instances mentioned in Holy Writ may readily be explained as violations of the law. Similar violations of other laws regarding servitude were bitterly complained of and denounced by the prophets. The parable of the debtor who owed his king ten thousand talents, "and as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold,"[14] is thought to refer more probably to the Romans than to the Jews of our Lord's day. In brief, it appears that no Hebrew could be reduced to servitude against his will, unless guilty of a theft that he was not able to make good. Kidnaping and selling a man was a crime punishable by death: "He that shall steal a man and sell him, being convicted of the guilt, shall be put to death."[15] If a Hebrew, however, had come into the hands of a non-Hebrew residing in the land, he could be redeemed by his relatives. His freedom at all events was to be given him, his wife and children, in the year of jubilee, for then, as the Holy Book prescribed: "Every man shall return to his possession, and every one shall go back to his former family: because it is the jubilee and the fiftieth year."[16] The following details, gathered from Rabbinical literature, may be quoted here as a matter of interest:

> A man should not sell himself to a woman, nor to a convert, nor to a Gentile. Should he do so, however, even if he sells himself to a heathen temple, the sale is valid; but it then becomes the duty not only of his kinsmen, but of all Israelites, to redeem him, lest he become "swallowed up" in heathendom. The sale of a Hebrew into bondage should be made privately, not from an auction block, nor even from the sidewalk, where other slaves are sold.[17]

As under the Babylonian law, so among the Hebrews, too, a daughter could be sold into servitude by her father, as a man might sell himself. An ancient Babylonian law, later greatly modified, allowed a father to dispose of both wife and children as his chattels. The purpose of the Hebrew law was to insure that the daughter should be duly married either by the master

[14] Matt. xviii. 25.
[15] Exod. xxi. 16.
[16] Lev. xxv. 10.
[17] "Jewish Encyclopedia," Article: "Slaves and Slavery."

or by his son. If she failed to please the master he must allow her to go. If he betrothed her to his son, "he (the master) shall deal with her after the manner of daughters." But if his son took another wife, she was properly to be provided with another marriage, and to be given fitting raiment and compensation. If these conditions were neglected she might walk out free without any ransom.[18] Although the original unity and indissolubility of the marriage bond, as God instituted it in Paradise, and as Christ was to restore it, had long ago been lost, yet the religion of the Hebrew, as is again plain, did not fail to throw safeguards about woman, so that even in servitude she might be protected against the caprice of man. But for the full beauty and purity of the Christian law and sacrament the day had not yet come.

[18] Exod. xxi. 7–11.

Chapter XIII

THE BONDMEN OF THE HEBREWS

We have seen how the Hebrew master was in every way hedged about by divine commandments that took from him all arbitrary power over his unfree servant. He was constantly reminded of the obligations of justice, charity and religion. In none of the essential things of life might he exalt himself above his bondman. On this fact rested the distinction between Hebrew servitude and pagan slavery. Typical of the entire Scripture teaching was the sentiment of Job when he dwelled upon the common origin and destiny of bond and free, and their absolute equality before God. Equally typical of paganism, on the other hand, was the attitude of Varro, coldly classing slaves with beasts of burden,[1] or of Aristotle, describing them as instruments endowed with life.[2] The nearest approach to Hebrew ideals was to be found in Babylonia, and yet we know too well the vices of that civilization.

Hence when Maimonides, in the Talmudic literature, insists upon humane treatment for the unfree laborer, he qualifies such conduct as distinctive of the Israelite. Cruelty to slaves, he says, exists among idolatrous nations only. Yet while all servants were to be treated with humanity and religious consideration, a clear distinction was made between the Hebrew and the foreigner. The Book of Leviticus expressly commands that the former may never be sold as a bondman, a term distinctive of the status of the foreign servant as contrasted with the unfree Israelite, and it adds:

> Let your bondmen and bondwomen be of the nations that are round about you, and of the strangers that sojourn among you, or that were

[1] *De Re Rustica*, i. 71.
[2] *Pol.* i. 4; *Eth. Nic.* viii. 13.

born of them in your land. These you shall have for servants; and by the right of inheritance shall leave them to your posterity.[3]

That a distinction in favor of the Hebrew should be made among the unfree servants in the Hebrew household was to be expected. It was not merely that the manservant or maidservant of Hebrew blood were of their master's own race, kith and kin of the Patriarchs and prophets, but also that they had been set aside by almighty God as His own special servants, being members of His chosen race, from which should blossom forth the Messias. For all these reasons it was strictly forbidden to impose upon any Hebrew servant tasks that were distinctive of the bondman. He must be treated as a "hireling and a sojourner," under his master's roof. So the Scripture expressly commands.

The Hebrew servant was in temporary bondage only, but the foreign bondman and bondwoman of the Israelite were not, like the Hebrew servant of either sex, to be freed after the sixth year, or at the year of jubilee. As the text just quoted from Leviticus clearly shows, they were to remain with their Hebrew master and to pass on, with their offspring, to his heirs. This was not for them an unmixed evil. Rescued from paganism, like a brand snatched from the burning, they were, without exception, adopted into the true religion, and thus received all the blessings which the law of the Old Testament could bring to them. The permanent loss of temporal freedom helped to secure their perseverance in that higher liberty which consists in the possession of the one true God. Prone as the Israelite himself was to idolatry, the danger was obviously far greater for the proselyte.

That this religious aspect of the question was not overlooked by the Jews is certain. Turning to the *Mishnah*, where all foreign servants are indiscriminately grouped as "Chanaanites," we find that the Hebrew is most strictly forbidden to sell his foreign bondman and bondwoman to a Gentile. The reason given is lest they fall into apostasy. If such a sale had actually taken place, this document declares, the Hebrew master was to be forced to redeem his former bondman or bondwoman, even though obliged to pay ten times the price he had received for

[3] Lev. xxv. 44–46.

them. After purchasing them back, he was at once to set them free. Such, according to the *Mishnah,* was his punishment for preferring lucre to the religious perseverance of his servants.[4] Again, to quote once more that same authority, it was evidently because of the danger of contamination and perversion that the Hebrew master might not, by sale or otherwise, transfer his foreign servant to any place outside the Holy Land. If he attempted to do this the servant was to be set free.

These statements have not the weight of the Scripture law, as given in the Sacred Books, but they are quoted merely as another evidence of the Israelite's religious zeal for his bondmen and bondwomen. The latter, it appears, accepted with good will the religion of their Hebrew master or mistress, for no reference whatever seems to be made to any difficulty in that respect. Whatever their hardships, life in a devout Hebrew home was sunshine for them compared with the darkness, misery and unspeakable moral abomination of slavery in the surrounding heathen countries.

In the first place they fully shared in the great spiritual privileges of the people of God. "And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron," we read in the Book of Exodus, "this is the service of the Phase: no foreigner shall eat of it. But every bought servant shall be circumcised, and so shall eat."[5] They had part with their masters in the spiritual festivities of the nation: "There shall you feast before the Lord your God, you and your sons and daughters, your manservants and maidservants, and the Levite that dwelleth in your city."[6] The servant of the priest might even eat of the sanctified food whereof the daughter of the priest, if married to any of the people, might not partake: "But he whom the priest hath bought, and he that is his servant born in his house, these shall eat of them."[7]

The foreign bondman thus became a member of the family, partaking in its feastings and spiritual joy, one with master and children in the great brotherhood of the children of God. Such

[4] *Git.* 46b, 42a.
[5] Exod. xii. 43, 44.
[6] Deut. xii. 12.
[7] Lev. xxii. 11.

was the spiritual ideal. While the wicked servant was to be punished, and idleness was considered the mother of vice, and seemingly hard words were spoken in Ecclesiasticus of the servant who must be forced to do his labor, yet the same Book does not fail to add: "If thou have a faithful servant, let him be to thee as thy own soul: treat him as a brother, because in the blood of thy soul thou hast gotten him."[8] These surely are strong words. And again the Hebrew master is told: "Hurt not the servant that worketh faithfully. . . . Let a wise servant be to thee as thy own soul, defraud him not of liberty, nor leave him needy."[9] Such doctrines were a world removed from those of pagan slavery, even though individual Greek or Roman masters might at times rise above their philosophy and treat with consideration certain favorite slaves. For the Hebrew the law of kindness and brotherhood was to be the invariable rule, not the rare exception. Outside of Israel there was no such doctrine.

Particularly interesting, as a contrast to pagan practices, was the law in Deuteronomy, referring to slaves who might flee for refuge to the Jews:

> Thou shalt not deliver to his master the slave that is fled to thee. He shall dwell with thee in the place that shall please him, and shall rest in one of thy cities. Give him no trouble.[10]

That in a nation which, for all the favors heaped upon it, so often turned from almighty God, masters might at times fail entirely to restrain themselves, is clearly indicated in the law: "If any man strike the eye of his manservant or maidservant, and leave them but one eye, he shall let them go free for the eye which he put out. Also if he strike out a tooth of his manservant or maidservant, he shall in like manner make them free."[11] As a sanction and corrective is was lawful, indeed, "to make the side of a malicious slave to bleed," yet even then his life was sacred: "He that striketh his bondman or bondwoman with a rod, and they die under his hands, shall be guilty of the

[8] Ecclus. xxxiii. 31.
[9] Ecclus. vii. 22, 23.
[10] Deut. xxiii. 15, 16.
[11] Exod. xxi. 26, 27.

crime."[12] But the punishment for murder was not inflicted if the death did not occur on that same day; the deed was then regarded as probably less heinous.

In contrast to all these restraints placed upon the Hebrew master was the complete power of life and death usually given by paganism over the slaves. Until the second century of our era the Roman master might still torture, mutilate or kill his slave for any reason or none. He was butchered to make a Roman holiday for the plebeian rabble. He was put to death upon the stage to add a tragic realism to the scene. He was cast into the pond of some luxurious epicure to give a flavor to his eels. He was hung in bloody torture on the cross, with tongue plucked from this throat, that a Roman matron might feed her spite on him. The shining plaything in the hands of the proud Roman mistress was a cruel stiletto. with which to stab in blind fury at the trembling maid that in some trifle failed to serve her whim.

Most horrible of all was the reeking vice of impurity which slavery intensified in a pagan household. That there was this danger even among the Jews is sufficiently clear. The Talmud discourages the ownership of many slaves, giving this very reason in the case of woman. Yet as the bondman in the Hebrew household was to be carefully instructed in the service of the Lord, so the handmaid was to be protected in her purity according to the Hebrew ideals.

As an example of the restraints specified in the law we may cite the instance of a woman taken captive in war. She might be made the wife of the Israelite, but only after he had taken her to his house and given her a month to mourn for her dead. Little as the entire situation appeals to a Christian there is a touch of chivalric consideration in it of which paganism would have been incapable. It simply assigned her to the captor. The Jewish law guarded her purity and secured for her a lawful wifehood. If she afterwards failed to please her spouse he might dismiss her, having the right of divorce which Moses allowed to the Israelites, but which Christ annulled. Yet the woman thus dismissed could not be disposed of for money. She must be

[12] Exod. xxi. 20.

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allowed to go forth free. Such a provision could not even have been dreamed of in pagan Greece or Rome. The life and teaching of Christ and the virgin motherhood of Mary were to raise our ideals far higher and confer upon woman her full dignity. Nevertheless, the Hebrew law accomplished what was then possible, for the Jew possessed neither the knowledge of Christ nor the sacramental grace that was conferred by marriage under the New Law.

Foreign slaves were bought or taken in war by the Israelites as the Israelites themselves were dragged into captivity and sold far and wide among the nations of the earth. Thus the Lord recalls through his Prophet Joel how His people had been scattered in their captivity, and how Tyre and Sidon had sold them to the Greeks, who carried off to a distant country the children of Juda and the children of Jerusalem. As a fitting retribution he foretells:

> Behold, I will raise them up out of the places wherein you have sold them, and I will return your recompense upon your own heads. And I will sell your sons and your daughters by the hands of the children of Juda, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, a nation far off, for the Lord hath spoken.[13]

So amid all the dispensations of life, however much men might by their own perversity cross the beneficent will of God, divine Providence was ever carrying out the infinite wisdom of its own great plans, punishing and rewarding, until the Desired of the Nations should come and the shackles be stricken at last from the slave. Even among the Jews the number of the unfree who were privately owned by Hebrew masters is thought to have been relatively small as compared with Greece or Rome in the classic age. No figures are given us in Holy Scripture, except for the period when the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity. They then numbered 42,360, "besides their men-servants and women-servants of whom there were 7,337."[14] This is hardly a period from which we can fairly draw conclusions. But if we turn to Greece we find that the Athenian census of B. C. 309, though not

[13] Joel iii. 7, 8.
[14] 1 Esdras ii. 65.

entirely reliable, places the number of slaves in that city at 350,000, as against 45,000 free male citizens.

Finally, there is one other consideration which must not be overlooked. It is the abundant freedom from toil granted the Hebrew servant and the foreign bondman alike. The law of the Sabbath released them from work as surely as it compelled their masters to suspend all labor. So, too, the seventh year was a "sabbath to the land, of the resting of the Lord." There was to be no sowing, pruning or reaping. Besides this, each year had its feast of unleavened bread, which lasted seven days. Similarly a long list of festivities might be added, aside from the Hebrew family feasts, which extended at times over many days.

It is not contended here that every Hebrew master always observed both the letter and the spirit of the law. The Prophets sufficiently disabuse us of such a view. But the point is that the Jewish religion insisted most strongly upon humane treatment for the unfree population, protected under all conditions the human dignity of man and woman, and provided with leisure, consolation and abundant "refreshment" of body and spirit the foreign bondman and bondwoman, wherever the law was faithfully followed.

Religion among the children of Israel had answered its purpose. Wisely it did not demand more of them than their nature, with its weakness and passion, their antecedents and surroundings would permit. To ask for more would have required special miracles of grace that were not then included in the general designs of God's merciful Providence.

A particularly favorable sign that shows servitude, even for the bondman and bondwoman, was far from intolerable, is the fact that reference to servants fleeing from their Hebrew masters is extremely rare. In all countries, ancient and modern, where slavery existed, the question of the fugitive slave and of fugitive slave laws, was always uppermost.

Insurrections of slaves are a frequent event in history. Horrible punishments, including death by stoning in Anglo-Saxon days, awaited the fugitive upon his capture. No such problem is mentioned in the sacred literature of Israel. The exceptional

statement of Nabal, in the First Book of Kings, that "servants are multiplied now-a-days who flee from their masters," merely indicates to us that such had not been the case at other periods.[15]

What, then, had revealed religion done? It had taken the social conditions of its time and infused into them, without violence or strain, higher standards, casting its protecting mantle about the weak, guarding virtue and purity in man and woman, and providing even for the least and last the full opportunity of perfectly serving his Creator in the manner befitting his high human dignity. Truly a great achievement!

The law of kindness which religion inculcated into the faithful Israelite extended even to the brute creation, so that the produce of the land in the Sabbatical year was to be left free for the very beasts of the field, as well as for anyone that might wish to eat of them. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out thy corn on the floor."[16] Deuteronomy commanded. And again: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and ass together,"[17] because, as Ibn Ezra explains in his commentary on this text, the strength of the ass would be taxed over much if it were forced to draw the plough-share with the ox. Touching on these points Dr. Moses Hyamson adds:

> The mother of an animal and its offspring must not be slaughtered on the same day (Lev. xxii. 28). The young of an animal must not be taken from its dam, not even for sacrifice, for the first seven days after birth (Lev. xxii. 27). An animal that has fallen down must be helped to rise up (Deut. xxii. 4). Even if the beast belong to an enemy, we may not pass by and leave it prostrate: "If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under its burden, thou shalt forbear to pass it by; thou shalt surely release it with him" (Exodus xxiii. 5).[18]

While such kindness was to be shown towards the brute creation, over which God had given dominion to man, how much greater the gentleness which man must manifest towards his human servants made like himself to the image and likeness of

[15] 1 Sam. (1 Kings) xxv. 10.
[16] Deut. xxv. 4.
[17] Deut. xxii. 10.
[18] American Jewish Year Book, 5684, p. 164.

God! This conclusion every true Israelite understood. In this he was to be distinguished from all the surrounding nations. Kindness towards even the wild beast was to prevent him from ever hardening his heart towards his own fellow-man. All this, too, was the triumph of religion.

Chapter XIV

RICHES, POVERTY AND WAGES

One of the principal reasons, as we have seen, why manual labor was so thoroughly and ignominiously despised among the Greeks and Romans of the classic age was because of its inseparable association with slavery. It was the badge of the slave. Among the Hebrews the master himself was in practically every case a laborer, taught to hold labor itself in honor. Among the pagans a man sold into slavery was by that very act dehumanized. He was henceforth classed in the same category with his master's tools and beasts of burden. It inevitably followed that labor, of which he stood as the living symbol, must be equally degraded with him.

But the injury to labor was not confined to its loss of dignity. Free labor, competing with slave labor, as it was compelled to do, was depressed economically also to nearly the same level with the slave. Among the Israelites, who were strictly an agricultural people, competition between free and unfree labor did not exist in the same sense as in the great pagan industrial centers. Yet, here too, there were times, aside from seasons of dearth and drouth, when poverty became acute, and oppression was merciless. The explanation in such instances was that religion had declined and the rich disregarded its precepts. This was clear from the burning denunciations of such conditions in the Hebrew Prophets.

The fact, however, that Hebrew freemen were at times forced to lease themselves voluntarily into the six-year period of servitude which the law allowed, shows that there was always a measure of poverty. But since this implied no extreme degradation, and the Hebrew servant, so indentured, was strictly to be regarded as a "brother" by his master, this point must not be stressed too severely. We do not desire the return of such a

system, yet it was far better than allowing men to starve and women to sell their virtue. Moreover it divided obligations between master and man.

Another circumstance to be borne in mind is that productive property, in the best sense of the word, because it was agricultural property, was widely distributed, and such distribution was safeguarded by a special system intended to prevent land capitalism. For all these reasons a labor question, in the modern sense of the word, could not arise while these safeguards were respected. But we need not imagine that the social problem was settled then or will ever be fully settled in the future. There will always be a social problem remaining under whatever system we may adopt. The worst programs unquestionably are those that promise to solve the social question once for all. In short, there is no social system that can remove original sin and its consequences. Let us always remember that, and then do the best we can to promote the spread of a Christian system of cooperation. Nevertheless, cooperation, of its own kind, was not lacking among the Old Testament Jews, even though it never reached the perfection at which we must aim.

The age-old story of poverty was expressed by Ben Sira when he wrote: "The poor man hath laboured in his low way of life, and in the end he is still poor." The rich man, on the other hand, was then, as now, exposed to spiritual ruin through the lure of gold. Inordinate attachment to it would naturally beget in his soul, all the vices that follow as a consequence. In the strong words of the same writer: "He that loveth gold shall not be justified." For: "Many have been brought to fall for gold, and the beauty thereof hath been their ruin." The world has not changed, and there were men and women of wealth whose souls were eaten away with the passions of greed or pleasure then as now. Not for one age but for all time are the warning words: "Gold is a stumbling-block to them that sacrifice to it; woe to them that eagerly follow after it, and every fool shall perish by it."[1]

We can well understand, therefore, the wisdom of the Church in advocating a social ideal that shall distribute the goods of

[1] Ecclus. xxxi. 4–7.

this earth as widely as possible, and avoid to the utmost the excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, to the detriment both of themselves and of the many.

Yet justice, according to the Sacred Books, is not necessarily incompatible with riches, provided there be no inordinate attachment by which they are preferred to the law and the love of God: "Blessed is the rich man that is found without blemish, and that hath not gone after gold, nor put his trust in money nor in treasures."[2] But how often may we truly say that wealth is sought purely for the love of God? How often, rather, is it sought without any reference to God, or even in open defiance of His laws? Hence the words of our Lord, which could not be stronger, comparing the rich man's chance of entering into the kingdom of heaven with that of a camel seeking to pass through the needle's eye. Yet, He too, let us remember, tells us that by the grace of God even the rich man can be saved, "but with God all things are possible."[3] However, it is with the Old Testament that we are here directly concerned.

"If riches abound, set not your heart on them,"[4] is the Psalmist's exhortation. But for himself the wise man asks of God: "Give me neither beggary, nor riches: give me only the necessaries of life."[5] This, without any doubt, is the happiest and safest state of man. "For gold and silver hath destroyed many,"[6] and the very desire for them may be as dangerous as their possession, filling the soul with vanity and vexation of spirit, with envy, greed and unhappiness. "Better is a little to the just," in the words of the Psalmist, enforcing this same doctrine, "than the great riches of the wicked."[7] The supreme riches of life are accessible to all alike: "Riches and strength lift up the heart, but above these is the fear of the Lord."[8]

Yet beggary too, as experience shows and the Scripture teaches, has its perils, and this is particularly true where it is due to

[2] Ecclus. xxxi. 8.
[3] Matt. xix. 23–26.
[4] Ps. lxi. 11.
[5] Prov. xxx. 8.
[6] Ecclus. viii. 3.
[7] Ps. xxxvi. 16.
[8] Ecclus. xl. 26.

man's own shiftlessness and idleness. The professional beggar was a familiar sight in the streets of ancient Jerusalem no less than he is on twentieth-century Broadway in New York. "The life of him that looketh towards another man's table is not to be counted a life,"[9] the Scripture says of him. The lot of the ordinary man, spiced with religious contentment and his bread salted by honest toil, was the genuine blessedness in which the great masses of the children of Israel were taught to find their treasure: "The life of the labourer that is content with what he hath, shall be sweet, and in it thou shalt find a treasure."[10]

Such, then, was the Old Testament doctrine on poverty and riches, and on that golden mean wherein man could find his earthly blessedness if content to possess just the things that were reasonably necessary for him. To make this possible for the laborer the law required that his just wage should be given to every worker, whether Jew or stranger. What was more, it was to be paid him on the self-same day before the setting of the sun. In our own day delay in payment often causes the greatest suffering to the workingman. Thus was the law written in the Book of Deuteronomy:

> Thou shalt not refuse the hire of the needy and the poor, whether he be thy brother, or a stranger that dwelleth with thee in the land and is within thy gates. But thou shalt pay him the price of his labor the same day, before the going down of the sun, because he is poor, and with it maintaineth his life, lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be reputed to thee for a sin.[11]

The Book of Leviticus is no less plain: "The wages of him that hath been hired by thee shall not abide with thee until the morning."[12] Particularly interesting are the admonitions of the elder Tobias to his son when he believed that the time of his death was close at hand. Among them the subject of wages is thus briefly set forth, with added advice that would solve most labor troubles if seriously taken to heart:

[9] Ecclus. xl. 30.
[10] Ecclus. xl. 18.
[11] Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.
[12] Lev. xix. 13.

If any hath done any work for thee, immediately pay him his hire, and let not the wages of thy hired servant stay with thee at all.

See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another.[13]

But the most terrible pronouncements are made in Holy Scripture regarding the man who not merely delayed the payment of wages, but actually withheld from the poor their proper due. "He that oppresseth the poor upbraideth his Maker."[14] He was insulting God in the outrage inflicted upon His Divine image in man. Hence the cause of the poor was the cause of God, and no one might presume to wrong them, no matter what his rank and power: "The Lord will not accept any person against a poor man, and he will hear the prayer of him that is wronged."[15] Hence the strong words of Ben Sira:

He that offereth sacrifice of the goods of the poor is as one that sacrificeth the son in the presence of the father.

The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; he that defraudeth them thereof is a man of blood.

He that taketh away the bread gotten by sweat is like him that killeth his neighbor.

He that sheddeth blood, and he that defraudeth the laborer of his hire, are brothers.[16]

Surely terrible words, which St. James re-echoes in the New Testament.

"Woe unto him," we read in the Prophet Jeremias, "that buildeth up his house by injustice, and his chambers not in judgment: that will oppress his friend without cause, and will not pay him his wage."[17] Thus, again, religion was the protection of the laborer, and if he lived in the fear of God, Heaven's blessing rested upon his toil. Direct reference, of course, is usually made to that temporal blessing which was so greatly insisted upon with the Jew, even as temporal evils befell him for his neglect of the divine Commandments: "For thou shalt

[13] Tobias iv. 15, 16.
[14] Prov. xiv. 31.
[15] Ecclus. xxxv. 16
[16] Ecclus. xxxiv. 24–27.
[17] Jer. xxii. 13.

eat the labors of thy hands."[18] Ecclesiastes thus describes the moderate enjoyment of the results of honest toil:

> This therefore hath seemed good to me, that a man should eat and drink, and enjoy the fruit of his labor, wherewith he hath labored under the sun, all the days of his life, which God hath given him: and this is his portion.[19]

While the question of alms-giving does not lie directly in our path, the solemn injunction of Tobias to his son upon this subject will fittingly round out what has already been said upon the general theme of riches and poverty. They are golden words, although not found in the worldly wisdom of a Polonius addressing advice to his Laertes. Hearken then to the counsel of Tobias:

> Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person; for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from thee.
>
> According to thy ability be merciful.
>
> If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little.
>
> For thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity.
>
> For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness.
>
> Alms shall be a great confidence before the most high God, to all them that give it.[20]

Of equal importance was the solemn injunction against exacting usury from a fellow Hebrew, to which attention has already been called. "Thou hast taken usury and increase,"[21] was the reproach pronounced against Jerusalem by Almighty God through His Prophet Ezechiel. Among the qualities of the just man designated by the Psalmist not the least was that he "hath not lent upon usury, nor taken increase."[22]

We have now surveyed the high ideals of justice and charity, and of social obligations which the religion of the Israelites, from first to last, inculcated into the hearts of men, where it

[18] Ps. cxxvii. 2.
[19] Eccles. v. 17.
[20] Tobias iv. 7–12.
[21] Ezechiel xxii. 12.
[22] Ps. xiv. 5.

was not misinterpreted by false teachers. It was not the fault of their religion that so many turned from the worship of Yahweh and the observance of His commandments only to fall into the moral degeneracy and social disorders which the Prophets so vividly pictured and vigorously denounced. Yet in spite of vice and corruption and economic oppression around them, there always remained a remnant of the true seed of the children of the Saints, who bore witness even in their blood to their faith in Yahweh that none might take from them. Beautifully writes the author of the Book of Wisdom:

Wherefore I wished, and understanding was given me; and I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came upon me.

And I preferred her before kingdoms and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of her.

Neither did I compare unto her any precious stone, for all gold in comparison of her is as a little sand, and silver in respect to her shall be counted as clay.

I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light, for her light cannot be put out.[23]

The ideal, in fine, of the Hebrew man of wealth was that presented in the Book of Job, though Job himself is described as "a man in the land of Hus." Of his sense of justice towards his servants, whom he recognized as his equals before God, I have already spoken. Of his tenderness towards the poor and helpless, and of his brave and successful exertions to protect them from oppression the best testimony was the esteem in which men held him. In one of the most beautiful passages in all literature the inspired poet makes him say:

The ear that heard me blessed me,
And the eye that saw me gave witness to me;
Because I had delivered the poor man that cried out,
And the fatherless, that had no helper.
The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me,
And I comforted the heart of the widow.
I was clad with justice
And I clothed myself with my judgment, as with a robe and a diadem.
I was an eye to the blind,
And a foot to the lame.
I was the father of the poor,

[23] Wisdom vii. 7–10.

And the cause which I knew not I searched out most diligently.
I broke the jaws of the wicked man,
And out of his teeth I plucked away the prey.[24]

Well may the Christian seek to emulate this type of the great servant of Yahweh, the type of a true gentleman of every age, for whom the will of God was beyond earthly riches and all that is precious here below. The greatness of his love of God was necessarily paralleled by the greatness of his love for man. This was manifested in his justice towards the toiler, in the service gladly given to all who needed his help, in his fearless defense of the weak against the depredations of the strong.

True gentleness he had drunk in with his mother's milk: "For from my infancy mercy grew up with me, and it came out with me from my mother's womb."[25] The largess of modern philanthropists has often been bestowed out of the extortions exacted from the poor. "Philanthropy" was with Job no substitute for justice. Hear his words:

> If my land cry out against me,
> And with it the furrows thereof mourn;
> If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money,
> And have afflicted the soul of the tillers thereof;
> Let thistles grow up to me instead of wheat,
> And thorns instead of barley.[26]

When we seek the causes that were able to account for and produce such a "social individual" in whom the hope of every commonwealth rests, we find them to be the same as in our own age or in any age of the world's existence. They flow directly from the fountains of true religion. Hence that grand act of faith in which the Book of Job culminates and which every true Christian can repeat with the "man in the land of Hus." This man of deep thought and of wide experience, who knew the ways of the ships and from whom the desert held no mysteries, who fathomed in vision the depths of the seas and who followed the daring miner down to the furthermost veins of silver and the beds of iron ore, who knew the quarries of "the

[24] Job xxix. 11–17.
[25] Job xxxi. 18.
[26] Job xxxi. 38–40.

stone also that is in the dark and shadow of death,"[27] expresses his supreme wisdom, in which through all times the world must look for its salvation, in that glorious testimony which he wished his chisel might grave in imperishable flint:

> For I know that my Redeemer liveth,
> And in the last day I shall rise out of the earth;
> And I shall be clothed again with my skin,
> And in my flesh I shall see my God.
> Whom I myself shall see,
> And my eyes shall behold,
> And not another:
> This my hope is laid up in my bosom.[28]

[27] Job xxviii. 1–3.
[28] Job xix. 25–27.

Chapter XV

THE GROWTH OF A PROLETARIAT

Amid the mighty political changes that took place in the days of Samuel and Saul, in the eleventh century before Christ, when the theocracy of the people of Yahweh was converted into a human monarchy, economic conditions altered but slightly. The Israelites still remained an agricultural race, with the old fondness for pastoral pursuits never extinct in them.

More than a thousand years later, when the sacred feet of the long-foretold Messias at last trod the soil of Palestine, we hear Him in His divine appeals conforming Himself to the ancient predilections of His people, and dwelling with delightful charm on the simple scenes of country life, seaside labor and pastoral occupations. His pictures are of the scattering of seed and planting of vines, of the casting of nets and the shepherding of flocks. The splendors of Solomon in all his glory are as nothing compared with the beauty wherein God Himself hath clothed the lily of the field.

On sociological forecasts the millennium preceding the coming of Our Lord should have seen the rise of industry. Yet this development never took place, in any large sense. Even to the present day, the Jews as a race are not devoted to production on its industrial side. Domestic industries, such as spinning and weaving, were of course inseparable from agricultural life, and possibly had already reached their highest stage of artistic perfection in those magnificent tapestries woven by the hands of men and women for the Tabernacle of Yahweh in the wilderness. In the cities, too, manufacturing was of necessity practised, but never on a scale that remotely compared with the industrial enterprise of such nations as the Tyrians and the Sidonians.

It is true that in the reign of Solomon construction was carried

on at a tremendous rate, but the Israelites themselves formed an insignificant portion of the workers during these twenty years of Temple and palace building. The laborers were mainly foreigners, imported for this purpose, or else the Chanaanite inhabitants of the land whom Solomon had impressed into forced service. David, in fact, had already begun to assemble the "proselytes," as the members of the numerous foreign nations under Hebrew dominion were called:

> And he commanded to gather together all the proselytes of the land of Israel, and out of them he appointed stonecutters to hew stones and polish them to build the house of God.
>
> And David prepared in abundance iron for the nails of the gates, and for the closures and joinings, and of brass an immense weight. And the cedar trees were without number, which the Sidonians and Tyrians brought to David.[1]

And yet, by degrees, a great economic evolution did occur. But it was commercial and not industrial in its nature. Owing to the fact that the strongly fortified cities on the caravan roads long remained in Chanaanite hands, this transition was delayed.

At first, these independent Chanaanite business men, did all the trading. They furnished implements to the Hebrew husbandmen, occasional ornaments to the women and luxuries for the household of the more wealthy, and took in exchange the surplus of the harvest and domestic articles manufactured by the deft and thrifty housewives. The word Chanaanite, therefore, came to be accepted as synonymous with merchant. It is so used in the Book of Proverbs where we are told of the wise woman, that in addition to artistic clothing for personal use: "She made fine linen, and sold it, and delivered a girdle to the Chanaanite."[2]

However, the trading instinct soon began to manifest itself. An independent trade, without the Chanaanite middleman, was probably first carried on by members of those tribes which were most advantageously situated for such intercourse. In this sense, Scripture scholars interpret the blessing bestowed by Moses on Zabulon and Issachar: "Who shall suck as milk the

[1] 1 Paralip. xxii. 2–4.
[2] Prov. xxxi. 24.

abundance of the sea, and the hidden treasures of the sands."[3] So also Debbora describes Dan as busy with shipping and Aser as abiding in the havens.[4] But the Israelites of this epoch, participated only in a small way in the commerce of the world; trade was carried on principally by others. The Chanaanites drew the lion's share of advantage and profit from their own trade with the Israelites.

The commercial expansion of the Hebrews began in the later period of the Judges. Under the kings, they won possession of the fortified towns and trading routes which the Chanaanites hitherto had jealousy guarded and successfully defended. In the peaceful years that followed the Davidic wars, and the brilliant and warless reign of Solomon, the Israelites really first secured a good foothold in world commerce, for they then held in their hands the key to the commercial situation in Palestine.

Yet the life of the great body of the people themselves did not undergo any profound economic transition. Their occupations remained altogether the same. They were to the end an agricultural and a pastoral race. But luxury and display soon spread within the large cities where the wealth of the nation came to be more and more centralized in the hands of a comparatively small number who exploited the masses of the people, in town and country, and who finally depressed them to the level of a mere proletariat.

This had not yet come to pass in the days of Solomon's prime. Gold was then so plentiful that silver was not esteemed at the royal court, but besides the king every Hebrew tribesman had also prospered individually. A tremendous demand for the products of the soil had now been developed, or rather had normally grown up in the world market. The Hebrew farmer was by this time doubtless fully competent and understood the nature of his soil and the intensive cultivation of it. He loved his fields of barley and wheat, his vineyards, oliveyards and apple orchards. His oil and grain became famous, and he exported wine and balsam. There was abundance for all.

The Chanaanite, now completely subjected, naturally did not

[3] Deut. xxxiii. 19.
[4] Judges v. 17.

fare so well. Yet we must consider his lot in the perspective of the times. He was certainly treated immeasurably better than he would have fared under any other Oriental power of those days. His human rights were firmly secured, his participation in the Hebrew ceremonies and worship raised him to a high moral elevation. His necessary leisure was inviolably assured by the Mosaic legislation. The best things and the greatest things in life were kept within his reach by his inclusion in what was then the one true Faith.

But for the Hebrew farmer and worker, the high point of prosperity had by this time been attained. His decline was to set in under Solomon himself. This king was merchant prince no less than Oriental monarch. We find him delivering vast quantities of wheat and oil annually to Hiram, building his own merchant marine to sail in cooperation with the Tyrian monarch, and making purchases of horses in Egypt and Coa, "for the king's merchants brought them out of Coa, and bought them at a set price."[5] But voluptuousness led to his moral and religious downfall, and so to the beginning of the misery of the people because he burdened them with forced labors and excessive taxes.

The oppression of the masses begun by Solomon and increased by his royal son and heir, Roboam, resulted in a division of the realm. But in the separated monarchies of Juda and Israel, with their capitals at Jerusalem and Samaria, infidelity developed in rulers and peoples that was to lead to the most fatal results. Ever greater numbers were forced into the ranks of that Hebrew proletariat whose sad fate is so clearly to be read between the lines of the great prophecies that were uttered and written in those disastrous times.

In both kingdoms commerce became an absorbing occupation. The products of the Hebrew farmer were no longer mainly for home consumption, as in the days of the Judges. A large foreign trade must have greatly increased the prices of food to the Israelitic household. The long arm of the heartless exploiter of the poor reached to every corner of the land. Exorbitant profits remained in the hands of the unscrupulous middlemen. Great

[5] 1 (3) Kings x. 28.

fortunes were accumulated by princes and merchants, while the people were plundered and sank into the poverty that degrades. Collusion was common between the men in public positions, and the oppressors of the poor. Not merely were judges bribed, but the laws themselves were written to accommodate rich clients. False prophets and idolatrous priests brought the power of religion to the support of the moneyed oligarchy. Even the goods of the widow and the orphan made part of the spoil of the exploiters of labor and poverty. The last stage had been reached into which the great nations of the world have all drifted in their turn, a stage of national wealth and national corruption, with excessive riches in the hands of a few and excessive poverty the lot of the many. The Hebrew nomad, the Hebrew farmer, the Hebrew empire builder had now at length become the Hebrew proletarian.

The Mosaic laws that should have protected the small landholder were recklessly disregarded. Here was again the consequence of the neglect of true Messianic Yahwehism. Listen to the Prophets as they denounce the greed of the grasping rich of their day:

"They have coveted fields, and taken them by violence," exclaims Micheas.[6] "Woe to you that join house to house and lay field to field," powerfully inveighs Isaias.[7] There was no limit to their greed once the law of God was disregarded. Yet nothing, these men well knew, was more detestable in His sight than this tearing up of the landmarks and boundary stones that marked the possessions of their poor neighbors. To express the loathing of Yahweh at the Judaic nobility of his day the Prophet Osee needed but to say: "The princes of Juda are become as they that take up the bound."[8]

Not content with their forbidden gains, the unjust rich of those days used every known means of fraud and deception in measure, weight and goods. They defrauded the poor of their wages and worked them without any mercy. Again and again the Prophet Amos fiercely attacked these men, so that for his

[6] Micheas ii. 2.
[7] Isaias v. 8.
[8] Osee v. 10.

brave words he was denounced to the king as a revolutionist. Thus he arraigned them:

Hear this, you that crush the poor, and make the needy of the land to fall, saying: "When will the month be over, and we shall sell our wares; and the sabbath, and we shall open the corn: that we may lessen the measure, and increase the sicle, and may convey in deceitful balances; that we may possess the needy for money, and the poor for a pair of shoes, and may sell the refuse of the corn?"[9]

Even when Israel had been destroyed, never to be restored, and the small remnant of Juda returned from their long captivity to which the infidelity of princes and people had brought them, the old spirit of heartless cupidity at once exerted itself anew. The rebuilding of Jerusalem had hardly begun when already we find the extortioners busy at their task. In amazement at the pitiless barter we behold the poor people forced to sell to them their sons and daughters, and to mortgage their lands and vineyards and houses that they might have bread. Usury is exacted in defiance of God's law and the cry of impoverished and despairing masses goes up for relief to Nehemias:

Behold we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters, and some of our daughters are bondwomen already, neither have we wherewith to redeem them, and our fields and our vineyards other men possess.[10]

And yet at the heart of even these bitter oppressors there was something that the grace of God could touch. For Nehemias, calling them together and reproaching them for their violations of God's commandments, bade them to forgive the debts that were owing them, and to restore the fields and vineyards and oliveyards and houses they had seized.

And they said: "We will restore, and we will require nothing of them and we will do as thou sayest." And I called the priests and took an oath of them, to do according to what I had said.

Moreover I shook my lap, and said: "So may God shake every man that shall not accomplish this word, out of his house, and out of his labors, thus may he be shaken out, and become empty." And all the multitude said: "Amen." And they praised God. And the people did according to what was said.[11]

[9] Amos viii. 4–6.
[10] Nehemias v. 5.
[11] Nehemias v. 12, 13.

. Here is one more example of the power of religion to secure social and economic welfare. If laborer and employer spurn this power there is no salvation, here or hereafter. Earth can be made a foretaste of Paradise or of Hell, accordingly as religion is faithfully obeyed or its counsels are cast to the wind.

Chapter XVI

SOCIAL MISSION OF THE PROPHETS

As defenders of the rights of the people, as champions of the poor and the oppressed, the Hebrew Prophets will always occupy a most conspicuous place in the social history of the world. Their mission was religious, but religion and social interests, as we cannot too often repeat, are inseparably connected. Of this the Prophets afford us a signal illustration.

The gift of prophecy is found at the very beginning of the Hebrew race. The name of prophet, *nabhi,* is already applied to Abraham when King Abimelech is ordered to return to him Sara his wife, "for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live."[1] The same term is in various instances applied to Moses, and we are told in fact that: "There arose no more a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."[2] There were others also at that time in the Israelite camp who received the prophetic spirit, like the seventy ancients whom Moses ranged around the Tabernacle; "And when the spirit had rested on them they prophesied."[3]

Mention is made here too of a *nebhiah,* or prophetess, Mary, the sister of Moses. In fact, the next great prophetic figure whom we behold arising after the heroic days of Moses is again a woman, the glorious Prophetess Debbora, "a mother in Israel," who alone was able in her day to save her people from oppression, and who will for all time stand in the foremost rank of the world's greatest women. Considered as a poem, merely, her wonderful canticle, composed according to the most refined principles of art and with all the perfection of a Greek chorus, would suffice to win her this distinction. Her concluding words, applied

[1] Gen. xx. 7.
[2] Deut. xxxiv. 10.
[3] Num. xi. 25.

to Sissara, slain by a woman's hand, express the prophetic zeal for Yahweh which was to fire all the great Prophets from the days of Samuel to the destruction of Israel and Juda, and on beyond those woeful years:

> So let all thy enemies perish, O Yahweh!
> But let them that love thee shine, as the sun shineth in his rising.[4]

Historically considered the Prophets were the mouthpiece of God, the conveyors of His message to king and people. In this sense Yahweh Himself uses the word *prophet* when Moses pleads his inability to address Pharaoh: "Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet, Thou shalt speak to him all that I commanded thee; and he shall speak to Pharaoh."[5] The Prophets were not merely to foretell future events. They were the preachers, the missionaries of their time, whom God sent to a people sunk into idolatry, or constantly reverting to it. As the light of the Levites waned in the divided kingdoms of Israel and Juda, that of the Prophets grew unto the full day. There was need still of the Levite's function. But while in his sanctuary the Levite offered sacrifice to God, these preachers of Yahweh stood in the foreground of their age, men of striking figure and fearless speech, pouring forth their inspired message in torrential eloquence. They faced the monarch on his throne and dared to foretell him things bitter and evil in the sight of his courtier priests and prophets; they denounced in public the iniquitous rich, their theft, graft and luxury, but with no less firmness they pictured to the great masses of the people, whom they loved so much, the certain doom and fearful punishments that would follow upon the abominations of their idol worship. Again and again God's judgments fell with dreadful weight, precisely as the Prophets had predicted, but nothing could convert the hardened hearts of those generations until the final destruction came which for years had been the burden of the tremendous prophecies. Yet something at least was accomplished since they helped to preserve for Yahweh a remnant of holy souls that indeed was never wanting.

The great era of prophecy may be said to have begun under

[4] Judges v. 31.
[5] Exod. vii. 1, 2.

the judgeship of Samuel. Then, at least, we suddenly come upon a fully developed institution such as that presented to us in the picturesque description Samuel himself gives to Saul.

> And when thou shalt be come there into the city, thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery and a timbrel, and a pipe and a harp before them, and they shall be prophesying. And the spirit of Yahweh shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be changed into another man.[6]

Great dignity is evidently attached to this office in the time of Samuel, and the people who had known Saul "yesterday and the day before" were struck with astonishment and inquired of one another: "What is this that has happened to the son of Cis? Is Saul also among the prophets?"[7] So that this expression became proverbial.

While the precise function of the Prophets under Samuel is not well known to us we come across definite groups of so-called disciples of the Prophets in the age of Elias and Eliseus. They are described in the Scriptures as *bene-nebhiim*, or "sons of the Prophets," and appear to have formed confraternities similar to the religious communities in Christian times. We see them at Bethel and at Jericho. When Eliseus accompanied Elias, just before the latter was taken up by the Lord in a fiery chariot, "fifty men of the sons of the prophets followed them."[8] Then it was that Eliseus asked Elias to obtain for him his "double spirit."

In opposition to these true messengers, servants and friends of God, we find also the false prophets gathered into large groups, much larger apparently than those of the Prophets of Yahweh. Thus when Elias issued his challenge to the worshippers of the *baalim* or false gods, he bade King Achab to summon all Israel unto Mount Carmel, "and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, who eat at Jezabel's table."[9] This was a formidable host for one man to face, but Elias had God on his side, and that sufficed. He not

[6] 1 Sam. (1 Kings) x. 5, 6.
[7] 1 Sam. (1 Kings) x. 11.
[8] 2 (4) Kings ii. 1–16.
[9] 1 (3) Kings xviii. 19.

merely exposed and confounded them, but ridiculed with keenest irony their helpless idol and bade them, with cutting sarcasm, to cry out to him with still a louder voice: "Perhaps he is talking, or is in an inn, or on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened."[10] When in his own turn he received from Yahweh the miracle for which the false prophets in vain implored Baal, he at once ordered that they be put to death, even to the last man among them, for such was the law given by God and clearly set down in Deuteronomy. In the sight of heaven these men were murderers of souls. They flattered the princes and people, predicted to them the things they wished to hear, and promised the blessings of God to men and women living in vice, idolatry and social injustice.

Ruinous to civic welfare the false prophets certainly were, and the social as well as the religious regeneration of the Hebrew tribes more and more depended upon the true Prophets of Yahweh, until in the divided kingdoms of Israel and Juda we see practically no hope of salvation except such as might come from God through them. Even in the reign of David, it is Nathan the Prophet who effectively speaks to the king's conscience when this monarch had compassed the death of Urias the Hethite, that he might take the man's wife for his own. What could be more touching than that parable of the poor man's ewe, of which the rich man had robbed him, which Nathan then told the King? And how startling the transition when pointing at David himself the accusing finger, the Prophet suddenly exclaimed: "Thou art the man!"[11]

So, again, in the days of the aged Solomon, when in his luxury and idolatry the once popular and glorious monarch grew callous to the sufferings of his people, oppressing them with servile burdens and taxations, another Prophet, Ahias the Silonite, foretold the doom of his kingdom. Led by the Lord, Ahias went into the field beyond Jerusalem and there met Jeroboam. Then taking his own garment he cut it into twelve pieces, telling Jeroboam to take up ten of them. So in the language of Oriental symbolism he predicted what God had made known to him: How

[10] 1 (3) Kings xviii. 27.
[11] 2 Sam. (2 Kings) xii. 7.

the entire northern section of Solomon's kingdom, with its ten tribes, was to pass into the hands of Jeroboam. Only Juda, blended with Benjamin, would remain to the foolish son and heir of Solomon.

In social literature Jeroboam is spoken of as a labor leader. Of his father the Scripture tells us that he was "a servant of Solomon." Of Jeroboam himself, in his youth we are informed that Solomon, "seeing him a young man ingenious and industrious, made him chief over the tributes of the house of Joseph."[12] He had, therefore, risen from the ranks and was set by Solomon over the labors which had been imposed upon the tribes of Ephraim and Manasses. We there find him acting as overseer of the industrial operations which the king was carrying on in the construction of Mello and in filling up "the breach in the city of David his father."

Carefully observing his labor forces, Jeroboam could not fail to notice the discontent of the workers compelled to do corvée tasks for a Judaic ruler, whose extravagances were doubtless common talk among the groups of these alien tribesmen. So he may first have come to the conclusion that the time for revolt was ripe and that the elements to carry this out were now at his command. Yet he was doomed to failure in this effort. Only after Solomon's death, the Prophet had foretold him, would God take away the ten tribes. Soon, therefore, after the scepter had fallen from Solomon's lifeless hand, Jeroboam reappeared. We see him at the head of a massed gathering of the people with whom he marches, in no threatening way, to the palace of Solomon's son and successor, Roboam. What ensued the Scripture thus relates:

> And Jeroboam came, and all the multitude of Israel, and they spoke to Roboam, saying: Thy father laid a grievous yoke upon us: now therefore do thou take off a little of the grievous service of thy father, and of his most heavy yoke, which he put upon us, and we will serve thee.[13]

Instead of heeding his better counsellors, the young king followed the advice of his entourage of haughty young nobles, reared at the luxurious court in Solomon's declining years and as his

[12] 1 (3) Kings xi. 28.
[13] 1 (3) Kings xii. 2, 3.

final answer he recklessly told the men: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions.[14]

To such a pass had the once free Hebrew worker been brought within a few years after the devout and glorious worship of Yahweh was eclipsed at the court by the cult of "Astarthe the goddess of the Sidonians, and Chamos the god of Moab, and Moloch the god of the children of Ammon."[15] Such ever was the effect of irreligion and paganism.

In this juncture the great man, who even in the most tyrannical period of Solomon's reign had dared to stand by the worker, was Ahias, the Prophet of the one true God. At the answer of Roboam the prophecy of Ahias at once went into fulfilment: the ten tribes seceded, forming what was henceforth to be known as the Northern kingdom of Israel, while Juda and Benjamin remained with Roboam, constituting all that hereafter was to be included in the Southern kingdom of Juda. When Roboam determined to make good his claims against the seceding tribes, it was once more a Prophet, Semeias, "the man of God," who stayed his hand.

But like many another labor leader, risen to power, Jeroboam proved a curse to the people who had followed him. Forgetting how completely his success was due to Yahweh, and that the permanency of his house, as Ahias had predicted, was to depend entirely upon fidelity to Him, he set up two golden calves, one at Bethel and another at Dan, which were to bring all Israel into sin. His aim and plan were to prevent the pilgrimages to Jerusalem, which, in spite of God's assurance, he feared would wean the people from him and from his house.

To banish this fear from his throne he did not hesitate to appeal to the lowest instincts of the people and deliberately put in their way the grossest temptation, to which he well knew they were only too prone—the sensuous and debasing practice of calf-worship which of old had brought God's wrath on their own forefathers in the desert. So, through the foul betrayal and ingratitude of Jeroboam, the way was prepared for the later idolatry

[14] 1 (3) Kings xii. 14.
[15] 1 (3) Kings xi. 33.

and ultimate ruin that this entailed. But what is a people's welfare to a crafty, ambitious and impious prince!

That, in brief, is the story of the labor leader Jeroboam. It is important that modern sciologists should read the character of this man aright. He was a traitor to the people. Like Saul he proved a menace and a failure. The evil he did lived after him.

Among the most influential rulers of the new Northern kingdom was Achab, noted for the cities he built and his ambitious palace of ivory, the envy of other monarchs. He, too, might have been a great ruler, except for his wife Jezabel, the evil woman into whose toils he completely fell, and whom he permitted to make use of all her power and ingenuity for the introduction of Phoenician idolatries among his Hebrew subjects.

Again it was a Prophet, and this time Elias the Thesbite, who stayed the progress of destruction. Clad in a hairy garment, bound with a leathern girdle this man of God suddenly appeared before Achab and predicted the punishment of Yahweh that would fall upon king and people: "There shall not be dew or rain these years, but according to the word of my mouth."[16] After his flight from the face of the angered monarch, who breathed vengeance at these words, the Prophet was miraculously fed by a raven, and finally took up his abode with a poor widow woman of Sarephta whose dead child he raised again to life. So with God's poor he made his home.

Both he and his successor, Eliseus, were to receive in a remarkable way the gift of working miracles. This divinely conferred power was no less needed by them in the idolatrous state to which Israel was then sunk, than by Moses and Aaron when confronting the pagan Pharaoh. Worse than Pharaoh was the abhorred Jezabel.

Nowhere perhaps does the defense of the rights of the people by the true Prophets stand out more conspicuously than in the famous instance of Naboth's vineyard. This property, which lay close to his palace, was coveted by Achab that he might turn it into a pleasure garden for himself. He was willing to secure it by exchange or purchase, but Naboth looked upon the keeping

[16] 1 (3) Kings xvii. 1.

of his paternal heritage as a sacred matter. Even when the temptation of profiting by the bargain was clearly held out to him he remained firm: "The Lord be merciful to me, and not let me give thee the inheritance of my fathers." Then Jezabel, the evil spirit of the time in Israel, bade Achab leave it all to her. Forthwith an accusation of blasphemy was brought against the man in proper legal form, false witnesses were summoned, "sons of the devil," and in process of law he was stoned to death. The only obstacle had been removed and Achab might seize the desired bit of land.[17]

But he had reckoned without almighty God, for even then Elias was upon his way, fearlessly to charge him at God's bidding with the murder of Naboth. "Thus saith Yahweh," was the message he carried. "In this place wherein the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, they shall lick thy blood also."[18] Fighting in his chariot, the King was stricken with a wound that proved his death, and in that very place, the dogs came and licked up the pools of blood washed from the floor of his car. So, too, the death of the infamous queen was predicted by Elias: "The dogs shall eat Jezabel in the field of Jezrahel.[19] She was flung from her window at Jehu's orders, and trodden under the hoofs of the horses. When next the men sent to bury her returned to that place "they found nothing but the skull, and the feet, and the extremities of her hands."[20] Terrible, yet infinitely just, is the judgment of God when its hour strikes, but much more does its long-suffering here on earth surpass our comprehension. However, all eternity belongs to God.

The life of the true Prophets, great servants of Yahweh, was a life of zeal and tribulation. They still kept the spark of faith burning in Israel and Juda. In spite of all their warnings and fiery denunciations, they could not save their nation from its freely chosen fate, but they constantly held before it the high ideals of a pure religious teaching and defended unto blood the inviolable rules of social justice which the men of wealth and

[17] 1 (3) Kings xxi. 1–16.
[18] 1 (3) Kings xxi. 19.
[19] 1 (3) Kings xxi. 23.
[20] 2 (4) Kings ix. 35.

power were relentlessly transgressing. Other nations might sink as low as Israel and Juda, yet none had such Prophets to teach them the ways of love and justice and of high sanctity in the name of Yahweh, whose covenant with His people remained unbroken. But to be hated and hounded by King or people, whose passions they crossed and whose doom they predicted, was too often the lot of these saintly and heroic men. Too often we see them standing almost alone, like Elias at the mouth of that cave on the sacred mount of Horeb when to the voice of God: "What dost thou here, Elias?" the Prophet, veiling his face, made answer:

> With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant: they have destroyed thy altars, they have slain thy prophets with the sword, and I alone am left, and they seek my life to take it away.[21]

In the following chapters we shall study more in detail the life and social message of one and another of the greatest of these mighty men of God.

[21] 1 (3) Kings xix. 14.

Chapter XVII

AMOS, THE HERDSMAN OF THECUA

Amos of Thecua, certainly one of the most ancient of the prophetic writers of the Old Testament, was a herdsman and "dresser of figs" when God called him from his round of simple labors to fulfil a divine mission. His prophetic ministry fell within the first half of the eighth century before Christ, but his mighty social appeals for the laboring classes and the poor of his day are as intensely modern as any message from Bishop Ketteler or Pope Leo XIII in their struggle against the false individualism of their age.

Although born and raised in the southern kingdom of Juda, Amos was sent to prophesy to the now separated northern land of Israel. From the solitude of his native hills, and the simple care of sheep and kine, he was suddenly thrust into the midst of a populous and wealthy, but also highly corrupt civilization.

The period in question was the prosperous reign of King Jeroboam II. Something of the former Solomonic splendor had been regained at that time by the northern tribes in their great capital city of Samaria, which in a manner might be described as a Hebrew London, Paris, or New York of those days. Like these great metropolitan cities in the period of their most striking inequalities of fortune, it had its mansions and its slums, its lavish riches and its bitter poverty, its financial magnates and its numerous proletariat.

Yet it was not to Samaria itself that Amos turned his steps, but to Bethel, the religious center of the Israelitic monarchy, where the golden calf had been set up by Jeroboam I at the time of the very foundation of the kingdom. Ceremonial rites of the most exacting kind were observed with the greatest pomp and magnificence, but the worship was given to the idol of gold. The cult of Yahweh, the one true God, was blended with super-

stitious abominations, while in the groves and on the high places the smoke of incense curled from Canaanitish altars and libations were poured out to false gods. Modern materialism has but substituted for these, the equally absurd and debasing doctrinal idols that it worships.

It was a hard and ungrateful task the man of God had been sent to accomplish. He was prepared for it by no human training, nor had he been reared among the disciples of the prophets, the *bene-nebhüm,* who were gathered into large confraternities under Elias and Eliseus. To no such prestige could the simple worker, chosen by God for this great apostolate, lay any claim. Describing his humble origin, when challenged by the false priest of Bethel, Amos thus presented his only credentials:

> I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; but I am a herdsman, plucking wild figs. And Yahweh took me when I followed the flock, and Yahweh said to me: "Go, prophesy to my people Israel."[1]

He was, nevertheless, a divinely inspired Prophet, even if he could not be classed as such in the professional sense by the calf-worshiping Bethel priests. As the shepherd will yield to fear at the roaring of the lion, so at the call of God, with its powerful insistence, he had given himself up to follow the divine will:

> The lion shall roar,
> Who will not fear?
> Yahweh hath spoken,
> Who shall not prophesy?[2]

The written prophecies of Amos must be included in the world's most wonderful and forceful literature. They are a faithful summary, made by the Prophet, of his impassioned and richly figurative preaching through which God revealed His warnings and designs to the people of the Northern Kingdom. But before announcing the evils that threatened Juda and Israel alike, Amos won the confidence of his hearers by foretelling the just judgments of God that would fall upon the surrounding pagan nations who afflicted His people: "I will send a fire into the house of Azael, and it shall devour the houses of Benedad, and

[1] Amos vii. 14, 15.
[2] Amos iii. 8.

I will break the bar of Damascus." For was it not Damascus that had "thrashed Galaad with iron wains"!

But the student keenly alive to the questions of our day, will notice at once, that the very first attack directed against Israel was a denunciation of the social iniquities rife within this kingdom. Personifying financially and commercially successful Israel under the figure of a covetous merchant, the Prophet predicts the punishment of Yahweh,

> Because he hath sold the just man for silver,
> And the poor man for a pair of shoes.
> They bruise the heads of the poor man upon the dust of the earth,
> And turn aside the way of the humble.[3]

Summoning all the inhabitants to assemble themselves in spirit upon the mountains of Samaria, he impressively bids them look down into the great center of industry and commerce,

> And behold the many follies
> In the midst thereof,
> And them that suffer oppression
> In the inner rooms thereof.
> And they have not known to do the right thing, saith Yahweh,
> Storing up iniquities and robberies in their houses.[4]

Vividly similar are the powerful words of Pope Leo XIII where, in his Encyclical on "The Conditions of the Working Classes," he alludes to the abolition of the gilds and the discarding of the ancient religion, whence it came about that: "Workingmen have been surrendered, all isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition. The mischief has been increased by rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with the like injustice, still practised by covetous men." So, with wealth concentrated into the hands of a few, he saw in his time a yoke imposed upon the poor "little better than slavery itself."

The luxury and vice which Amos next condemns were then, as now, the inseparable accompaniments of riches acquired without regard to social justice, and disposed of without any sense

[3] Amos ii. 6, 7.
[4] Amos iii. 9, 10.

of stewardship under God. Voluptuousness is naturally found joined to hardness and cruelty towards others. The picture of unconscionable wealth in the politically and commercially successful Samaria of Jeroboam II does not differ in this regard from the scenes of self-indulgence and social vices which a modern prophet might portray in our day wherever riches have become dissociated from religion and the law of God. The local coloring only need be changed. But how those words of Amos must have burned like stings of nettles and of scorpions!

Woe to you that are wealthy in Sion,
And to you that have confidence in the mountain of Samaria,
Ye great men, heads of the people,
That go in with state into the house of Israel.
You that sleep upon beds of ivory,
And are wanton on your couches;
That eat the lambs out of the flock,
And the calves out of the midst of the herd,
You that sing to the sound of psaltery—
They have thought themselves to have instruments of music like David!—
That drink wine in bowls,
And anoint themselves with the best ointment,
And they are not concerned for the affliction of Joseph.[5]

But such things do not go unpunished even in this life. The only too notorious portion of our people of wealth whom we may describe as the unsavory rich fill the columns of our daily papers with the scandals of their divorces and social vices, with their excesses and their suicides. Yet the ultimate vengeance of God will fall upon these unrepentent men and women, who make a mockery of what should be the sacred trust of stewardship and use their wealth as if it were under their own absolute dominion and not the sole possession of almighty God, whereof they are to render to Him a most itemized account. Not the just possession of capital but its misuse is condemned by the Prophet of old and the priest of to-day.

In the case of Israel, God's punishment was to follow sure and fast, even as the Prophet predicted. Not the rich only, but the people too were to blame. They, too, had given themselves over to the vices of their own hearts and to the idolatries

[5] Amos vi. 1, 4–6.

of the Chanaanite and the Phoenician. And yet, "at the head of them that go into captivity," as the Prophet so clearly foresaw the event, were to be these iniquitous rich, exploiters of the people.

Not merely the men who had neglected their stewardship, be it carefully noted in these days of a feminism too often forgetful of sacred duties, but their wives also were to share in the same punishment. The Prophet held them accountable in large measure for the sins of their husbands. In place of an inspiration unto good to their men, which must ever be woman's high vocation, they became an incitement to evil.

"Fat kine," the herdsman Prophet calls these women. They pampered their bodies with luxuries, and induced their husbands to supply them with the means for their excesses at the cost of misery and suffering to the public, thus participating in merciless oppression of the poor and making themselves a prime cause of this shameful exploitation. There was consequently no mincing of words when the Prophet spoke in the name of God to these "first ladies" of Samaria, foretelling them what would come to pass when the fierce hordes of the conquering armies would rush through the blazing streets of their idolatrous city and apply the torch to their luxurious dwellings:

> Hear this word, ye fat kine
> That are in the mountains of Samaria,
> You that oppress the needy,
> And crush the poor,
> Who say to your husbands:
> "Bring and we shall drink."
> Yahweh hath sworn by his holiness,
> That lo, the days shall come upon you,
> When they shall lift you up on pikes,
> And what shall remain of you in boiling pots.[6]

Then changing from his figurative speech he describes them led out in long files through the rents and breaches of the battered walls, "one over against the other," with desolation behind them and dark doom before.

But not merely against the unjust rich was the voice of the Prophet raised. With equal severity he denounced those who

[6] Amos iv. 1, 2.

abetted and supported them in their iniquities. Cases were then tried at the city gates, and the judges who there pronounced false sentences in favor of wealth aroused the indignation of the Prophet. Needless to say his protestations were not taken in good part. "They have hated him that rebuketh in the gate, and have abhorred him that speaketh perfectly."[7] Doubtless Amos had met the fate he might meet to-day under similar circumstances. But this could not intimidate him. He was the servant of Yahweh and had come to speak the truth and tear the mask from the perverters of justice and judgment. The whole situation forcibly reminds us of that modern evil, the corporation judge. The sun-browned herdsman, facing these men and their wealthy clients, told them in plainer language than they were accustomed to hear:

> Therefore because you robbed the poor, and took the choice prey from him, you shall build houses with square stones and shall not dwell in them; you shall plant most delightful vineyards and shall not drink the wine of them. Because I know your manifold crimes and your grievous sins; enemies of the just, taking bribes, and oppressing the poor in the gate.[8]

But Amos was not a demagogue, like certain false modern leaders of the masses, who denounce the rich only and purposely overlook the faults and irreligion of the multitude. Infinite justice cannot dismiss unpunished the sins either of princes or of people. "Labor can do no wrong," is one of the destructive principles found in Socialist literature.

By the favor which Yahweh extended through His faithful Prophet, great evils were indeed averted from the people, but the masses as well as the classes, by their idolatry and sinfulness, persisted in calling down the wrath of Heaven. Amos, therefore, in a symbolic picture of wonderful power, taken from the labor world, exposed to them all their peril. He bade them look up and behold Yahweh standing before them, as a mason, trowel in hand. But his hand now was idle as He left unfinished the walls of Israel that He had been constructing for His ungrateful people. Here are the words of the Prophet:

[7] Amos v. 10.
[8] Amos v. 11, 12.

And behold, Yahweh was standing upon a plastered wall, and in his hand a mason's trowel. And the Lord said to me: "What seest thou, Amos?" And I said: "A mason's trowel." And the Lord said: "Behold, I will lay down the trowel in the midst of my people Israel. I will plaster them over no more. And the high places of the idol shall be thrown down, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste: and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."[9]

Only a short time, and all this was to come to pass. Invasion followed invasion, punishment succeeded punishment, until the kingdom of Israel was destroyed and the golden calf carried away, while those who still survived were marched off into a long and bitter captivity. Here they were granted time and grace to reflect and to return to the Lord their God. "Behold I will come, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as corn is sifted in a sieve."[10]

Telling the truth was never popular. Amos, like every other preacher of social reconstruction when his application of principles becomes too personal, was denounced as a revolutionist. Apparently the worship of the golden calf at Bethel waned in popularity and thus failed to bring in the wonted revenue. At all events Amasias, the idolatrous "priest of Bethel," now appeared before King Jeroboam II to announce: "Amos hath rebelled against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear his words." We are not told what response Jeroboam made, but we next find Amasias emboldened to accost Amos himself in these brusque and insulting words:

Thou seer, go, flee away into the land of Juda, and eat bread there, and prophesy there. But prophesy not again any more in Bethel: because it is the king's sanctuary and it is the house of the kingdom.[11]

[9] Amos vii. 7–9. It may be of interest to call attention here to the Protestant version which renders this paragraph: "And behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in his hand." The explanation of this substitution of "plumbline" for "mason's trowel" is rather interesting. St. Jerome, who had the assistance of learned Jewish scholars gave the present turn to the Catholic rendering. Other translators, finding that the Hebrew word in both Arabic and Syriac signified "lead," drew the conclusion that there must be question here of a plumbline.

[10] Amos ix. 9.

[11] Amos vii. 10–13.

But Amos was not to be silenced by the command of man while he still heard echoing in his soul the voice of Yahweh: "Go prophesy to my people Israel." Although the time was apparently close at hand when he would retire into his own hill-country, and perhaps there set down in writing, for his own and future generations, those tremendous prophecies that strike terror into the hearts of men like Amasias, the lascivous princes, the exploiting rich, the venal judges, the irreligious leaders and people in Israel, yet now, enlightened by almighty God, he turned on Amasias, and this was the terrible message that Yahweh gave him to convey to an idolatrous priest, an idolatrous home and an idolatrous generation:

> Thou sayest, thou shalt not prophesy against Israel, and thou shalt not drop thy words upon the house of the idol.
> Therefore thus saith Yahweh: Thy wife shall play the harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword; thy land shall be measured by a line, and thou shalt die in a polluted country; and Israel shall go into captivity out of their land.[12]

Even to this black cloud which Amos saw unrolling over Israel there was a silver lining. In imagery of exalted beauty he foretold in his closing words the period of final restoration that would come under the Messianic kingdom, which was to embrace all the nations. Then would the divine Mason take up again His trowel to rebuild on the ruins of the Davidic Kingdom a new and more sacred structure, enriched with untold blessings for Jew and Gentile alike, the Church of Christ, the spiritual kingdom of the Son of David:

> In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, that is fallen;
> And I will close up the breaches of the walls thereof,
> And repair what was fallen,
> And I will rebuild it as in the days of old.
> That they may possess the remnant of Edom,
> And all nations,
> Because my name is invoked upon them.
> Saith Yahweh *that* doth these things.
> Behold the days come, saith Yahweh,
> When the ploughman shall overtake the reaper,
> And the treader of grapes him that soweth seed;

[12] Amos vii. 16, 17.

And the mountains shall drop sweetness,
And every hill shall be tilled.[13]

That kingdom, God's holy Church, in which will be taught forever the true principles of holiness and social justice, even though its children will not all be true to its high teachings, is to last to the end of time, as the Prophet so plainly foretells: "And I will no more pluck them out of the land which I have given them, saith Yahweh."[14]

[13] Amos ix. 11–13.
[14] Amos ix. 14.

Chapter XVIII

SEER OF LOVE: PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

The kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Juda both rose to their acme of power and prosperity at approximately the same period. In the former, Jeroboam II won back all the northern possessions Solomon had held. In the latter, a similar succession of victories regained the southern portion of that once glorious realm. But in both kingdoms religious, moral and social conditions became worse with the growth of national wealth, which, as under the historic industrialism of modern times, meant great fortunes easily acquired by a few, and oppression for the many.

Fundamental in this decline was the religious deterioration of the tribes. The good kings, faithful to Yahweh, could quickly be enumerated. Priests and prophets, princes and judges had become corrupt and venal. Gold and not truth or justice decided the oracles of the false prophets who held no message from Yahweh. Bribes determined the judgments passed by the judges seated at the city gate. With impunity the rich robbed the poor of land and home.

Religion, however, was at a lower ebb in the Ephramite State, or kingdom of Samaria, as Israel is also called in the prophecies, than in the kingdom of Juda. Moral and social conditions consequently were here also more corrupt. Hence Israel was to meet its final doom sooner than Juda, but in both instances the cup of God's wrath was fast filling, and punishment and retribution were constantly overflowing its brim. Catastrophe followed catastrophe. Throughout the entire course of their history the chosen people of Yahweh either atoned for their transgressions by prayer and penance, and experienced God's mercy, or else persisted in their sins and idolatries and then met with fitting retribution.

During the reign of Jeroboam II the voice of Amos had sounded almost in vain through Israel's city of sanctuary. So far at least as the general state of public morality was concerned, there was no apparent betterment. Within six months after the death of Jeroboam, his son, Zachary, who succeeded him, fell by the hands of an assassin. His murderer, Sellum, in turn, was slain after a reign of one month by Manahan. This impious monarch held the scepter for ten fateful years, during which occurred the terrible intervention of the Assyrian King Tiglath-Pileser III. Finally, in 725, the last King of Samaria succumbed to the renewed attack of the Assyrians, was bound and cast into prison by Salmanasar IV. Three years more and Sargon captured Samaria and carried Israel away with him into captivity. The kingdom had ceased to exist.

Before this dire consummation the Prophet Osee (Hosea) was sent by God to confirm and continue the mission of Amos. No less than the herdsman of Thecua, did this seer of divine love understand the crimes committed in Israel against both God and His poor. In a pregnant verse he sums up the social transgressions of his nation:

> Cursing and lying, and killing and theft,
> And adultery have overflowed, and blood hath touched blood.[1]

Unlike Amos, he inveighed less directly against these social evils themselves, and centered attention instead on the source of them all, the irreligion of princes and the people, of rich and poor alike. The supreme sin of infidelity to their Creator he vividly describes as "fornication against their God," the same sin to which our own greatest social disorders are due.

Israel, the faithless bride, had abandoned her one true Bridegroom to espouse herself to many false gods. The very gifts which the Almighty had bestowed upon her, the abundance of corn and wine and oil, the silver and gold which He had multiplied for her, she no longer recognized as coming from His hand. Worst of all, she misapplied them to the service of her idols. But condign humiliation was awaiting her:

[1] Osee iv. 2.

And I will visit upon her the days of *Baalim*,
To whom she burned incense,
And decked herself out with her earrings and her jewels,
And went after her lovers,
And forgot me, saith Yahweh.[2]

Here is the great social error of our own and every other civilization that turns from the divine Lover to follow its *baalim*, the petty idols of its time. Such was the folly of our statesmen who assembled to make peace and excluded from their councils the Prince of Peace, following after the lure of their own wordly prudence, diplomacy, ambition and dreams of national aggrandizement with precisely the results they might well have foreseen. Such, no less, is the folly of those in our day who seek for social reconstruction, but build up their elaborate systems without God or religion. This is the most cardinal mistake of all, national or international, and disastrous consequences must follow from it. For every social structure that is not established upon God is resting on the sand.

The diplomatists of Israel and her people, in place of returning to God, looked for help to pagan princes, and met with destruction at their hands:

And Ephraim is become as a dove
That is decoyed, not having a heart.
They called upon Egypt,
They went to the Assyrians.
And when they shall go,
I will spread my net upon them.
I will bring them down as a fowl of the air,
I will strike them as their congregation hath heard.
Woe to them, for they have departed from me,
They shall be wasted because they have transgressed against me,
And I redeemed them,
And they have spoken lies against me.[3]

The pagan nations whom God permitted in their wickedness to become the instruments of His wrath against His chosen people, were themselves in turn to be broken for their sins. The covenant, concluded with Abraham and renewed under

[2] Osee ii. 13.
[3] Osee vii. 11–13.

Moses, was not made void. Like Amos, the prophet Osee, too, pointed to the great Messianic hope that after all the infidelities of Israel was to be realized in the Church of Christ. Then God would say "to that which was not my people," *i.e.*, to the nations of the Gentiles, "Thou art my people," and these in turn would answer Him: "Thou art my God." But there was first to be a period of preparation, the Prophet told his countrymen, when God would lead forth Israel into the wilderness of the Babylonian captivity, there to speak to her penitent heart. When the time came for Him to lead her back into her own country her attachment to her former idols, her false lovers, would have been completely lost. Such was in fact the case. The days following the period of exile became the immediate preparation for the Messianic fulfilment.

In that day, the day of the establishment of the Church of Christ, God was to espouse His true Bride in a new union that would henceforth be everlasting: "I will espouse thee to me forever." In that never-ending union of Yahweh with His Bride, of Christ with the Church, all the blessing of spiritual peace and spiritual riches were to be granted, even to overflowing. We can quote but in part this wonderful nuptial poem, as we may make bold to call it, the song wherein the Prophet Osee celebrates the espousals of the divine Lover with His Bride:

> Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
> And will lead her into the wilderness,
> And I will speak to her heart.
>
> And it shall be in that day, saith Yahweh.
> That she shall call me: "My husband,"
> And she shall call me no more, "Baali."
>
> And I will espouse thee to me forever,
> And I will espouse thee to me in justice, and judgment,
> And in mercy and in commiserations.
> And I will espouse thee to me in faith,
> And thou shalt know that I am Yahweh.
>
> And I will say to that which was not my people:
> "Thou art my people!"
> And they shall say:
> "Thou art my God!"[4]

[4] Osee ii. 14, 16, 19, 20, 24.

What a supreme social as well as religious lesson! Should not that tenderness and mercy in the divine Lover, sufficient to take back the repentant bride who had left Him for her false lovers, and to embrace her in His affection as a virgin, beautiful in the fairest flower of purity and innocence, have touched to its inmost depth the heart of the people, of rich and poor! Should it not have restored among them the love of God and the love of neighbor! Alas! even that wonderful message of Osee, still so thrilling after the lapse of all these many centuries, and which so winningly suggests to our yearning hearts something at least of those unfathomable depths of the divine Love, could not then convert a nation which had gone after the impure conceits of its own heart. Israel, as the Prophet foretold, would learn only through her humiliation and fall. She must first feel the full bitterness of that fate which even now stood without knocking at her gate, with mailed fist. A few more years and the kingdom of Israel would no longer be known among the nations of the earth. Her fate is another lesson for the men and women of our own time to ponder.

During the very years that Osee was denouncing the sins of his own people of Israel, the same mission was fulfilled with no less burning zeal in the sister kingdom of Juda by his contemporaries, Isaias and Micheas (Micah). The former we shall duly consider in another place. The latter has been described as "the tribune of the common people." Like Amos he inveighed in mighty words against the powerful and the rich who were then robbing and oppressing the people, causing homelessness and misery, and kindling thoughts of war and revenge among the citizens. Hear once more the age-old story of oppression from the Prophet's own lips:

> And they have coveted fields and taken them by violence, and houses they have forcibly taken away.
>
> They have oppressed a man and his house, a man, and his inheritance.
>
> You have taken away the cloak off from the coat, and them that passed harmless you have turned to war. You have cast out the women of my people from their houses, in which they took delight. You have taken my praise forever from their children.[5]

[5] Micheas ii. 2, 8, 9.

Surely, a terrible indictment to pronounce in the very face of these powerful men! It is our own duty to speak no less fearlessly where the industrial and commercial evils of our time and place demand it, not forgetting, however, that the gentleness of Christ should blend with the strength of Christ.

False measures were in common use by the merchants of that time: "A scant measure full of wrath," the Prophet calls them in referring to the anger of the Lord that filled them to overflowing. False weights, too, were resorted to: "Shall I justify wicked balances, and the deceitful weights of the bag?" Yahweh asks in His divine indignation.[6] We can well understand the dread accounting that must be rendered one day by those who have made fortunes by overcharging the poor for clothing, food and fuel.

In still more terrible terms the Almighty arraigns the princes and leaders of Juda for their insatiable avarice and greed. As human ghouls, the Prophet Micheas pictures them, despoiling and flaying the people, living on the flesh of the poor, cracking open their very bones to fatten upon the marrow of them. Could a more awful and powerful figure be chosen to expose the abhorrent process which in modern times was repeated in the *laissez faire* system of the post-Reformation era! Fearlessly the Prophet cries out:

> Hear, O ye princes of Jacob,
> And ye chiefs of the house of Israel:
> Is it not your part to know judgment,
> You that hate good and love evil,
> That violently pluck off their skins from them,
> And their flesh from their bones?
> Who have eaten the flesh of my people,
> And have flayed their skins from off them,
> And have broken their bones,
> And have chopped them as for the kettle
> And as flesh in the midst of the pot.[7]

What modern writer on social questions has ever used such stern, yet such true and dignified realism? Money, money, money; greed, greed, greed: that was the tale of Samaria and

[6] Micheas vi. 10, 11.
[7] Micheas iii. 1–3.

of Jerusalem before the wrath of God smote them even unto final destruction. From wealth easily and unjustly accumulated by means of extortion, graft and other evil practices, luxury and voluptuousness sprang up like the nettle and strangling weeds. And the root cause of it all, as we have pointed out, and must continue to point out, was the irreligion of high and low. But the more powerful were also the more responsible for these conditions. Priests and prophets alike had gone the common way, satisfied with a lavish outward observance of religious ceremonies. But these things could not deceive the true Prophet of God. Listen again to Micheas as he holds up to the eyes of these men the mirror of Yahweh:

Her princes have judged for bribes,
Her priests have taught for hire,
Her prophets divined for money,
And they leaned upon Yahweh, saying:
"Is not Yahweh in the midst of us?
No evil shall come upon us."
Therefore, because of you,
Zion shall be ploughed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall be as a heap of stones,
And the mountain of the temple as the high places of the forest.[8]

These, too, were terrible words. King and people did penance, for this message was spoken in the days of the great and God-fearing ruler Ezechias. So God in his mercy withheld the punishment prepared for them. Yet in the last chapter of these prophecies, that we may presume summarized his preaching of many years spent in the service of Yahweh, the prophet Micheas, too, finds that there has been no lasting fruit. He has become "as one that gleaneth in the autumn the grapes of the vintage," and there is not a cluster to eat. "The holy man is perished out of the earth."[9] Men cannot confide in their leaders, in their sons and daughters, in the very wife of their bosom. They have failed—religiously, morally, socially—and they must all go down to destruction, a destruction that could not be long delayed.

[8] Micheas iii. 11, 12.
[9] Micheas vii. 1, 2.

Let not their enemies, however, exult overmuch as they had them into captivity. God will still have mercy on a faithful remnant that will in the end be found true to Him. For Micheas, too, carried in his heart the great Messianic hope. Before his sight, as before that of his fellow Prophets, was unfolded in glory the vision of that new Sion where Jew and Gentile were to meet in the one true Church of Christ and all the prophecies would at last be fulfilled.

> In that day they shall come to thee,
> Even from Assyria and unto the fortified cities,
> And from the fortified cities even to the river,
> And from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.[10]

For God will forget the iniquities of His people, and will cast away the sins for which they have wept, even as a millstone that sinks out of sight into the depths of the sea. In the meantime, here is the brief rule of life the Prophet lays down for his people. Well for the nations to-day if they write it upon the walls of their chambers of State and their courts of justice and their halls of commerce!

> I will show thee, O man, what is good,
> And what the Lord requireth of thee:
> Verily, to do judgment, and to love mercy,
> And to walk solicitious with thy God.[11]

[10] Micheas vii. 12.
[11] Micheas vi. 8.

Chapter XIX

A PRINCELY PLEADER FOR THE MASSES

We have already learned in the company of Amos, Osee and Micheas how great were the social and religious disorders that existed in the kingdoms of Israel and Juda. In the North, Osee was still preaching his prophetic mission to a State falling in ruins about him when Isaias appeared as a prophet in the southern capital of Jerusalem. By birth, culture and ties of blood he was connected with the wealthy and ruling classes, but like Amos the herdsman and dresser of figs, his sympathy lay with the oppressed and disinherited poor. Both these men proclaimed the same social message, one to Israel, the other to his beloved Juda.

Isaias was a young man as he entered on his mission, about the middle of the eighth century before Christ, and apparently continued it for about half a century. During this entire period, he was a mighty power in his nation. With all his wonderful gifts, natural and supernatural, however, he was not able to transform the hearts of his countrymen, and thus avert God's wrath from them. We have here another striking illustration of the great fact in human history, that no violence is ever done to man's free will. He has blessings and curses set before him, but the ultimate choice, however, persistently God may counsel and urge, will still rest with him.

"I know that thou art stubborn," Isaias was bound to tell his people towards the very close of his stupendous ministry in Juda, "and thy neck is as an iron sinew, and thy forehead as brass."[1]

Merely administrative reforms count for little, as the whole history of Israel and Juda make plain. There can be no true and lasting reform which does not begin with a change of heart, and is not based upon religious motives. Love of our neighbor,

[1] Isaias xlviii. 4.

if it is to be genuine; to conquer selfishness, greed and class traditions; to seek the common good even at the expense of personal or group interests, must ultimately be prompted by the love of God. There is no other solution of the social problem.

The kings under whom Isaias prophesied were variously disposed towards the true worship of Yahweh. Ozias, known as Azarias, greatly contributed to the material prosperity of Juda and was generally favorable to religion. But in his weakness he failed to destroy the high places where the people continued their idolatrous sacrifices, and finally sought to intrude upon the priestly function. "And the Lord struck the king," the sacred text tells us, "so that he was a leper unto the day of his death."[2] After a long reign of fifty-two years he was succeeded by his son Joatham, who personally did what "was right before the Lord," but apparently dared not attack the "high places" where the people continued their abominations. Achaz, his successor, was himself an abomination before God. He not merely burned incense to the idols, but made his own son pass through fire, one of the rites of the atrocious Moloch worship taken over by the Israelites from the Phoenicians. The social evils, therefore, which were not put aside under Ozias and Joatham, were intensified under Achaz, but God humbled his pride and he was forced to bow his neck to the Assyrians.

From the last days of Ozias, and all through the reign of the succeeding monarchs, could be heard the warning voice of Isaias, which none dared to silence. But a new and different era began under King Ezechias, of whom Ben Sira says: "Ezechias did that which pleased God, and walked valiantly in the way of David his father, which Isaias, the great prophet, and faithful in the sight of God, commanded him."[3]

Under such guidance, King Ezechias destroyed the high places where the idols were worshipped, broke their statues in pieces, cut down the groves where superstitious rites were practised, and finally demolished the brazen serpent originally made by Moses, which the children of Israel had converted into a god. After the fashion of the nation about them, they worshipped it

[2] 2 Kings (4 Kings) xv. 4, 5.
[3] Ecclus. xlviii. 25.

as an idol, and burned incense before it, calling it by the name "Nohestan."

Of all the kings, the Scripture tells us, there was none like Ezechias. "He stuck to the Lord, and departed not from his steps."[4] Wherefore Yahweh was with him, and gave him success in battle, and even sent His angel to destroy the attacking army of the Assyrians. When the hour of death finally came, God heard the prayer of the holy king, as turning his face to the wall, he pleaded: "O Lord, remember how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is pleasing before Thee." Another fifteen years were added to his life, and it was Isaias who brought to him the answer of Yahweh to his prayer.

Yet even under such a king and with such a Prophet, Juda was not permanently converted. Whatever betterment had taken place in the religious, moral and social life of the nation was again undone by Manasses, the son of Ezechias, who introduced anew all the paganism and immorality which his father had labored so faithfully to extirpate. He set up altars to Baal and to the "hosts of heaven," that is, we may presume, to Shamash, the Babylonian sun-god, to the moon-god Sin, and to the various planetary deities. He made his son pass through fire, and brought back other abominations for which the Jews had repeatedly been punished by Almighty God.

But now the prophecies of Isaias had ceased. It is not even clear that he lived into the time of Manasses, although an old tradition which we find recorded in the Mishna, describes him as slain by this king, under whom Jerusalem was filled "up to the mouth" with innocent blood.[5] The familiar account that he was sawed in two by the order of the impious king is preserved in the Targum and the Talmud. Many of the Fathers believed they detected a reference to this martyrdom in the words of St. Paul regarding those who in former days, for bearing witness to God, "were cut asunder."[6]

To turn now to the preaching of Isaias. It is highly instructive

[4] 2 Kings (4 Kings) xviii. 3–6.
[5] 2 Kings (4 Kings) xxi. 16.
[6] Hebr. xi. 37.

to note that the young noble, in whose veins, Jewish tradition says, flowed princely blood, and whom it makes to have been a nephew of King Amasias himself, began his public mission, like Amos the rustic laborer, with a strong social as well as religious appeal. Yahweh, this scion of a noble line sternly told the proud and haughty leaders, would enter into judgment with the ancients of the people and the princes, for, he said:

> You have devoured the vineyard,
> And the spoil of the poor is in your house.
> Why do you consume my people,
> And grind the faces of the poor?[7]

And in even stronger words he cries out upon Jerusalem:

> Thy silver is turned into dross,
> Thy wine is mingled with water.
> Thy princes are faithless, companions of thieves;
> They all love bribes, they run after rewards.
> They judge not the fatherless
> And the widow's cause cometh not in to them.[8]

Again, like Amos in Israel, so Isaias in Juda assigned no small share of accountability for the robberies perpetrated upon the people, to the women of wealth in his unhappy country. If the Prophet was obliged to say of the poor in Sion that "their oppressors stripped them," the reason for this heaven-crying sin was in great measure to be found in the extravagance and luxury of the wives and daughters of the rich. Precisely as in Israel, the lavish expenditures of these women led to ever greater extortion on the part of their husbands. The ornaments with which they absurdly decked themselves were purchased at the cost of the sweat and blood of the poor. These excesses of vanity and sensuality in turn blunted still more the finer sensibilities of their men, and so ended in plunging society into a vortex of immorality and wantonness. None too bitter were the caustic words of the Prophet:

> And Yahweh said:
>
> Because the daughters of Sion are haughty,
> And have walked with stretched out necks,

[7] Isaias iii. 14, 15.
[8] Isaias i. 22, 23.

And wanton glances of their eyes,
And made a noise as they walked with their feet,
And moved in a set pace,
The Lord will make bald the crown of the head of the daughters of Sion,
And the Lord will lay bare their forehead.
In that day the Lord will take away the ornaments of shoes, and little moons, and chains and necklaces, and bracelets, and bonnets, and bodkins, and ornaments of the legs, and tablets, and sweet balls, and earrings, and rings, and jewels hanging on the forehead, and changes of apparel, and short cloaks, and fine linen, and crisping pins, and looking-glasses, and lawns, and headbands, and fine veils.
And instead of a sweet smell there shall be stench;
And instead of a girdle, a rope;
And instead of curled hair, baldness,
And instead of a stomacher, haircloth.[9]

Keen irony and fierce wrath flamed in the heart of the Prophet as he thus pictured these women with their mincing steps, their silly fashions, their perfumes, charms and vestures of gauze, their toilet boxes filled with priceless trinkets, paid for out of the pillage of the poor. But woe to them, for in the days of their captivity, swiftly approaching, rope and scab and haircloth should replace their ornaments, their beauty and seductive fashions!

Graft and bribery, we have already seen, were common in Juda. "Woe to you," the Prophet inveighs, "that justify the wicked for gifts, and take away the justice of the just from him!"[10] What opportunity did the poor man or the oppressed laborer have to obtain impartial justice under such conditions? Where could he carry his case on appeal? Not merely were the judges venal, but the laws themselves were formulated to serve the interests of wealth. All this the Prophet mercilessly exposed:

Woe to them that make wicked laws, and when they write, write injustice,
To oppress the poor in judgment, and do violence to the cause of the humble of my people,
That widows might be their prey, and that they might rob the fatherless.
What will you do in the day of visitation, and of the calamity which cometh from afar?
To whom will you flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?[11]

[9] Isaias iii. 16–24.
[10] Isaias v. 23.
[11] Isaias x. 1–3.

Modern monopoly of natural resources, too, had its precedents in Juda, and in plain language Isaias arraigned the men guilty of it, showing up the inevitable evils always found when a few men are able to exact tribute from an entire community. He had no pity upon the men who were even then dispossessing the small landholders and farmers, reducing them to hirelings or perhaps to servitude:

> Woe to you that join house to house,
> And lay field to field,
> Even to the end of the place.[12]

The curse of God was put on the possessions of these men, leaving their palaces desolate and their fields sterile. Their unjust riches, leading to luxury, ended in ruin: "Therefore hath hell enlarged its soul, and opened its mouth without bounds, and their strong ones, and their people, and their high and glorious ones shall go down into it."[13] The Prophet surely cannot have been popular with these classes. Yet neither did he spare the vices of the poor whom he loved with a truly Christ-like affection.

Before his mind and living in his heart was the image of the Messianic King. How like the preaching of the Son of man, the Saviour-God, are those words of censure for the hypocritical fasts by which the false leaders in Juda sought to win admiration and power for themselves, while ignoring the divine emphasis upon charity which is the bond of perfection:

> Is not this rather the fast that I have chosen?
> Loose the bands of wickedness, undo the burdens that oppress;
> Let them that are broken go free, and break asunder every burden.
> Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and harborless into thy house;
> When thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh.
> Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall speedily arise.
> And thy justice shall go before thy face, and the glory of Yahweh shall gather thee up.
> Then shalt thou call, and Yahweh shall hear:
> Thou shalt cry, and he shall say: "Here I am."[14]

[12] Isaias v. 8.
[13] Isaias v. 14.
[14] Isaias lviii. 6–9.

In making the last quotation, I am not unaware of the school of higher critics who would assign the later prophecies of Isaias to an unknown Second Isaias. In fact even a Third Isaias has been invented. A little digression to deal with this matter may be permitted here.

The prime reason for such assumptions, which flatly contradict the tradition of all the ages, is in many cases purely rationalistic. Men take for granted that no such thing as supernatural prediction is possible, or has ever taken place. The agreement of certain historic events, therefore, with the declaration in Isaias that they would come to pass, is for such critics merely an evidence that the passages in question could not possibly have been written until after the events themselves had happened. This line of reasoning perverts the whole mission of the Prophets sent by God.

In plain opposition, to this point of view are the inspired words of the Scripture itself. Clearly Ben Sira says of Isaias: "With a great spirit he saw the things that are to come to pass at last and comforted the mourners of Sion. For ever he showed what should come to pass and secret things before they came."[15]

The differences in style between the earlier and later prophecies are merely such as we can naturally expect from an older, riper man, without having recourse to the purely arbitrary invention of a "Great Unknown," as the imaginary Second Isaias has been called. We might just as well invent an entire series of Shakespeares to account for the vast differences in style between the plays of this poet's early, middle and later period. Contrast, for instance, "The Comedy of Errors" with the blasting fires of "King Lear" and the soul-searching terrors of "Macbeth."

As the Biblical Commission well says in its Decision of June 29, 1908, no solid arguments, singly or cumulatively, exist which necessitate the assumption that there were several authors for the book of Isaias. There is one Isaias, whom the Scripture calls the "Great Prophet," whose predictions of the Babylonic captivity were not more clear than his wonderful predictions of the Messianic Kingdom of Christ. He is both Prophet and Evangelist. The decision of the Biblical Commission is so illumi-

[15] Ecclus. xlviii. 28.

native in regard to the authorship of Isaias and the entire subject of prophecy that I make bold to quote it here in its entirety:

ON THE CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAS AND ITS AUTHOR

The Biblical Commission answers the following questions:

1. *Prophetical Character.*—Whether it may be taught that the prophecies which are read in the book of Isaias, and here and there in the Scriptures, are not real prophecies, but either narratives composed subsequent to the event, or, if it must be acknowledged that something was foretold before the event, that the prophet foretold the same, not from a supernatural revelation of God who foreknows the future, but by conjecturing through a happy sagacity and acuteness of natural intelligence from things that had already happened.

Answer: In the negative.

2. *Time of Fulfillment.*—Whether the opinion which holds that Isaias and the other prophets uttered prophecies concerning only those things which were to take place immediately or after a short space of time, can be reconciled with the prophecies, particularly the Messianic and eschatological, which were undoubtedly uttered by the same prophets as referring to the remote future, as well as with the common opinion of the Fathers who unanimously assert that the prophets foretold also those things which should be fulfilled after many ages.

Answer: In the negative.

3. *Authenticity.*—Whether it may be admitted that the prophets not only as correctors of human wickedness and heralds of the divine Word for the good of their hearers, but also as foretellers of future events, must always have addressed themselves to a present and contemporary and not to a future audience, so that they could be clearly understood by them; and that therefore, the second part of the book of Isaias (chapter 40–66), in which the prophet addresses and consoles not the Jews contemporary with Isaias, but those mourning in the exile of Babylon, cannot have for its author Isaias himself then long dead, but must be attributed to some unknown prophet living among the exiles.

Answer: In the negative.

4. *Unity of Authorship.*—Whether the philological argument, one derived from the language and the style, and employed to throw doubt upon the identity of the author of the book of Isaias, is to be considered weighty enough to compel a man of judgment, versed in the principles of criticism and well acquainted with Hebrew, to acknowledge in the same book a plurality of authors.

Answer: In the negative.

5. *Cumulative Arguments against Unity.*—Whether there are solid arguments, even when taken cumulatively, to prove that the book of Isaias is to be attributed not to Isaias alone, but to two or even more authors.

Answer: In the negative.

June 28, 1908.

Foreseeing, therefore, by the light of divine revelation, the future Babylonian captivity as an event present before him, the Prophet Isaias addressed himself to the Jews who were to mourn in that future exile and to whom his heart, providentially touched by the great mercy and love of God, now went out in words of tender consolation. So were those future countrymen, in their day of distress, to have from him a message of consolation, and so did he truly share with them in anticipation the bitterness they were to feel, as Christ wept over Jerusalem and as He bade the women lamenting Him on His way to Calvary: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me; but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days shall come, wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck."[16]

In future days the words of Isaias, read by the men who experienced in themselves the fulfilment of the divine prediction, came as a much-need word of comfort and encouragement sent from Heaven. Josephus states that Cyrus was so impressed by the exactness of the prophecy, on reading the passage in Isaias concerning himself, that he gave permission for the return of the Jews to their own home land.[17]

Thus the great mission of the Prophet continued to exert its influence for good through future years and made him one of the world's greatest social and religious reformers in the truest sense of that much misused word.

[16] Luke xxiii. 28, 29.

[17] Josephus Ant. xi. 1, 2. Isaias xliv. 26–28, xlv. 1–4.

Chapter XX

PROPHETS OF THE DAY OF WRATH

The kingdom of Israel had disappeared from history almost a century before the prophetic voice of Jeremias was raised in the streets of Jerusalem, foretelling the same doom to the kingdom of Juda. Mighty was the mission of this great seer of God. In his mother's womb he had been sanctified and designated by Yahweh "a prophet unto the nations."[1]

Great, but also terrifying was his divine call, and only with the assistance of God could that mission be fulfilled in the face of an idolatrous generation. No wonder the Prophet cowered within himself at the thought of his own weakness and cried out: "Ah, ah, ah, Lord Yahweh, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." But the divine voice comforted him:

> Say not: "I am a child";
> For thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee,
> And whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak.
> Be not afraid of their presence,
> For I am with thee,
> To deliver thee, saith Yahweh.[2]

He was not only to foretell the coming doom, but to live through all its horrors. He was to warn the people and though his warning would be vain, some at least would profit by it: "Are not my words as fire, saith Yahweh, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"[3] Often the Prophet would fain have swerved from his course, but like Paul, a divine impulsion enabled him to overcome such wavering. By direct command of God, he was to forego the joys of married life: "Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons

[1] Jeremias i. 5.
[2] Jeremias i. 7–8.
[3] Jeremias xxiii. 29.

and daughters."[4] His line was to end with him and was to have no part or lot in a generation that would perish unpitied amid pestilence, famine and the sword; whose carcasses, in his own words, would be "meat for the fowls of the air and for the beasts of the earth."[5] The time, indeed, was nigh when the voice of mirth would be silenced, the voice of gladness, the voice of the bride and the bridegroom. Yet by divine Mercy, every opportunity was first given these men and women to avert disaster by returning to the Lord their God. The fate of Israel alone should have sufficed for their conversion.

Again, therefore, the old, old lesson which millenniums of sad experience should have taught the human race, is repeated with all its variations. Even in our own day the leaders of the nations have failed to learn that social and national welfare is impossible for a people unfaithful to God. Its very prosperity turns into a curse. Like the men and women of Israel and Juda, our own generation has its false gods, its *baalim* after whom it runs, forsaking the divine Lover. No social remedy and no hope for international peace exists, unless leaders and people return to worship God in spirit and in truth. Godless education, materialistic evolution, divorce, birth control, the cult of impurity in press, literature, drama and life—these are some of the modern idols to which incense is offered to-day and libations are poured out in the "high places" and on countless altars. Yet great, too, is the uncounted number of the faithful flock, worshipers of Yahweh, followers of Emmanuel, "God with us," the Christ of all the prophecies, "of whose kingdom there shall be no end." With them, far more than in any social panaceas, lies the hope of reconstruction, of national and international peace and brotherhood. The social message of Jeremias, therefore, calls to us for action no less imperiously than it did to the Jews to whom it was immediately addressed.

If you will order well your ways and your doings; if you will execute justice between a man and his neighbor; if you oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, and walk not after strange gods to your own hurt; I will dwell with you

[4] Jeremias xvi. 1.
[5] Jeremias xvi. 4.

in this place, in the land which I gave to your fathers from the beginning and forevermore.[6]

It was during the reign of the great and good King Josias that the word of God came to Jeremias. His prophetic mission began no later than the year 627 B. C., and continued until after the fall of Jerusalem, which took place in 588 B. C. His task, as Ben Sira says, was not merely "to overthrow, and pluck up, and destroy," but also "to build again and renew."[7] He came at a time of religious and social reconstruction, when Josias was valiantly seeking to undo the evil wrought by his own idolatrous forebears, the kings Amos and Manasses. Moreover Sophonias, or as the King James version writes his name, Zephaniah, was thundering forth his denunciations against the rationalists of his day, "that say in their heart: the Lord will not do good, nor will He do evil."[8] Like Jeremias, this Prophet, too, proclaimed the day of the Lord in that great passage opening with the solemn words, *Dies irae, dies illa:*

That day is a day of wrath, a day of tribulation and distress, a day of calamity and misery, a day of darkness and obscurity, a day of clouds and whirlwinds, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high bulwarks.[9]

Like every true Prophet of God he did not hesitate to attack the men of power and influence in Jerusalem for their social injustice and their irreligion:

Her princes are in the midst of her
As roaring lions;
Her judges are evening wolves,
They leave nothing for the morning.

Her prophets are senseless men,
Without faith;
Her priests have polluted the sanctuary,
They have acted unjustly.[10]

[6] Jeremias vii. 5–7.
[7] Ecclus. xlix. 9.
[8] Sophonias i. 12.
[9] Sophonias i. 15, 16.
[10] Sophonias iii. 3, 4.

The Prophet Nahum, too, was sent to this generation. He foretold to his countrymen the destruction of the mighty and powerful Assyrian Empire, which, like other great world powers, sank to the depths of moral and social corruption when at the height of its cultural development. Surely another object lesson for the men of Juda, that God is as terrible in His judgments as He is wonderful in mercy and forgiveness. A few years more, and probably the very men who now listened to the prophecies of Nahum saw the wrath of Yahweh burning the chariots of the Assyrian. Like other mighty powers of our own day, too, the great Empire that for a time overawed the world had sought to destroy its rivals and prey upon the lesser States as its ligitimate spoil. These international questions Nahum set forth to his hearers as in the divine light he described the methods of imperialism, the same yesterday and to-day:

> The lion caught enough for his whelps,
> And killed for his lioness;
> He filled his holes with prey,
> And his den with rapine.[11]

But the Assyrian could not escape the punishment of God, and Nineveh, his proud city, city of blood and filled with lies and rapine, that multiplied her merchandise above the stars of heaven, was about to be laid waste with none to bemoan her. The hour had struck. Her people would be dragged away, her children dashed to pieces, her nobles gambled for among the spoils of war, her merchants and her great men bound in fetters, provided the sword had not devoured them.[12]

In the year 606 B. C. all this would come to pass. Another twenty years or less, and the same fate was to befall Jerusalem, but in vain was the lesson of Samaria; in vain would be the lesson of Nineveh. Surely God had patience with His people in spite of their ingratitude, when such Prophets were sent to them! Here, too, we catch a glimpse at the dealings of His Providence with the pagan nations, which in the fullness of Its wisdom, justice and love will be revealed in another life.

[11] Nahum ii. 12.
[12] Nahum iii. 10.

The Four Books of Kings contain an account of the great reforms undertaken by King Josias.[13] Unfortunately he was followed by three unworthy sons, weakling rulers on the throne of David: Joachaz, Joakim and Sedecias. Between the latter two occurs the merely nominal reign of Joakin, a son of Joakim. To all of these Jeremias announced the destruction that befell them, but he incurred in particular the wrath of Joakim. Mercilessly setting before this petty tyrant the mirror in which he might behold himself as an oppressor of his people, a withholder of wages, a man filled with covetousness, building by injustice extravagant palaces and glorying in his fancied greatness, the Prophet thus dramatized with Oriental vividness the conclusion of his course:

> Therefore thus saith Yahweh
> Concerning Joakim, the son of Josias,
> King of Juda:
> They shall not mourn for him:
> "Alas, my brother!"
> "Alas, sister!"
> They shall not lament for him:
> "Alas, my lord!"
> "Alas, his majesty!"
> He shall be buried with the burial of an ass,
> Rotten and cast forth
> Without the gates of Jerusalem.[14]

No wonder, when these lines were read to the haughty monarch, that mad with fury he leaped to his feet and snatching at the scroll cast it into the flames. At the same time he commanded the arrest of Jeremias. But the power of God protected His servant. Joakim was cut off in his early prime. Further details are conjectural, but the probabilities are he was denied the wonted Oriental ceremonies of mourning, and his body was thrown into the street or field by the conquering Chaldeans, as happened to Jezabel when in her regard a similar prophecy was minutely fulfilled.

No less fearless was this Prophet in exposing the crimes of the covetous rich in amassing wealth by fraud and injustice:

[13] 2 Kings (4 Kings) xxii, xxiii.
[14] Jeremias xxii. 18, 19.

As a nest is full of birds,
So their houses are full of ill-gotten goods,
So are they become great and enriched,
They are grown gross and fat.
They have most wickedly transgressed my words.
They have not judged the cause of the widow,
They have not managed the cause of the fatherless,
And they have not judged the judgment of the poor.[15]

Even the great covenant of the Lord, by which every Hebrew servant who had served six years was to be set free the seventh year, had been broken by these men. At a period of great peril, the masters indeed set free their menservants and maidservants of Jewish blood, but they soon brought them back to their former state of servitude. Yahweh was moved by the people groaning under such injustice to speak through His Prophet:

You have brought back again every man his servant, and every man his maidservant, whom you had let go free, and set at liberty; and you have brought them into subjection to be your servants and handmaids.

Therefore thus saith Yahweh: You have not hearkened to me, in proclaiming liberty every man to his brother and every man to his friend. Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith Yahweh, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will cause you to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth.[16]

There was stinging sarcasm in that liberty "to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine," granted the masters. All these evils the Prophet announced, in the name of Yahweh, to the men who denied their servants liberty. This is a good example of the way the true men of God ever defended the rights of the people against both the rich and the politically powerful when these abused their wealth and position. It is then doubly pitiful that the common people, whose cause they so nobly championed, should have proved themselves no better than their princes and masters. "From the least even to the greatest," the Prophet was compelled to say, "all follow covetousness; from the prophet even to the priest all deal deceitfully."[17]

With the masses corrupt, the pretended prophets speaking

[15] Jeremias v. 27, 28.
[16] Jeremias xxxiv. 16, 17.
[17] Jeremias viii. 10.

without a message and the false priests leading the people astray still further in the ways of idolatry, they were indeed all "an assembly of transgressors."[18] Rich and poor, young and old, participated in the idolatrous sacrifices. "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough."[19] So the cakes were prepared for the pagan worship. Truly a terrible picture! We can feel how the heart of the Prophet was filled with bitter grief. He wished he might flee far away into the wilderness. "My sorrow is above sorrow, my heart mourneth within me."[20] We have here a prototype of the Saviour lamenting over Jerusalem. For Jeremias tenderly loved his ungrateful people. "Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes?" he exclaims, "and I will weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."[21]

Instead of presenting a united front to the mighty nations that were prepared to rend it as the lion tears his prey, the kingdom of Juda was disrupted from within by extremist factions of every kind. Against all of these Jeremias leveled his dreadful prophecies. More than ever dependent upon the help of Yahweh, they turned away from the counsels of His Prophet. The last King of Juda, Sedecias, would probably have heeded Jeremias had it not been for his fear of the strong pro-Egyptian faction. Had he done so God would have preserved both him and Jerusalem, but otherwise, as the Prophet plainly told him: "They shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hands."[22] In his weakness the King failed to obey the divine message and the city was doomed. His sons were slain in his sight. His own eyes were put out by the conqueror, he was chained, dragged away and cast into a Babylonian prison to languish there and die. So the kingdom of Juda, like the kingdom of Israel, ceased to be. On the mount of Sion foxes made their den. The men of wealth and the women of Juda's nobility were marched off into captivity. Jerusalem was consumed by

[18] Jeremias ix. 2.
[19] Jeremias vii. 18.
[20] Jeremias viii. 18.
[21] Jeremias ix. 1.
[22] Jeremias xxxviii. 17, 18.

fire. Only a handful of the poor, "dressers of vines and husbandmen," were left, and among them, Jeremias, bewailing with bleeding heart the destruction he had so long predicted.

How is the gold become dim, the finest color is changed,
The stones of the sanctuary are scattered in the top of every street?
The noble sons of Sion, and they that were clothed with the best gold,
How are they esteemed as earthen vessels, the work of the potter's hand?[23]

Beginning his heroic mission in the days of Josias, the Prophet had continued it restlessly and fearlessly through reign after reign. Nor even now might his voice be silent, but he was still to carry on his bitter but sublime task, as God's interpreter, until the year 585 B. C. To high and low alike he preached through all these years his unwelcome and unpopular truth. At Anathoth, the city of his birth, life was not safe for him. In Jerusalem it was made a martyrdom. He was persecuted by the great and mighty, he was struck, chained, set in the stocks, cast into prison and thrown into a dungeon to starve. Often he was threatened with death or condemned to die, but never could the wrath of kings slay him or the fury of the people put him to death, for the power of Yahweh protected his life, as had so solemnly been promised him at the very outset of his stupendous career.

Thou therefore gird up thy loins,
And arise and speak to them
All that I command thee.
Be not afraid at their presence,
For I will make thee not to fear their countenance.
For behold I have made thee this day
A fortified city and a wall of brass
To the kings of Juda, to the princes thereof.
To the priests and to the people of the land.
They shall fight against thee,
And shall not prevail,
For I am with thee
To deliver thee, saith Yahweh.[24]

As Isaias was the Messianic Prophet, so Jeremias was called to be a figure of the suffering Christ. The words spoken of him

[23] Lament. iv. 12.
[24] Jeremias i. 17–19.

could fitly be applied by the Church to the divine Victim. He was, in his own flesh and blood, a living prophecy of the Redeemer. What greater lines has any Prophet left us than those in which Jeremias so beautifully foreshadows in himself the Lamb of God.

> And I was as a meek lamb, that is carried to be a victim; and I knew not that they had devised counsels against me, saying: "Let us put wood on his bread and cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more."[25]

The details of his death are not known to us. He accompanied a group of his poorer Jewish brethren in their flight to Egypt, and there, tradition says, he was stoned to death for the prediction of God's wrath that he made to them. It is eminently fitting when a life of martyrdom is also crowned with the martyr's death. In the Roman martyrology his name is given for the first of May.

[25] Jeremias xi. 19.

Chapter XXI

BEN SIRA AND THE TOILER'S LOT

Interesting pictures of the condition of manual labor among the Jews in the second century before Christ, when the Jewish nation again came into close contact with the Egyptians, are to be found in the Book of Ecclesiasticus. Its author is known in Jewish literature as Ben Sira, or the son of Sirach. His book, which comes down to us in the Greek translation made by his grandson, received its familiar Latin name because of the constant use made of it in the early Church.

Taking wisdom for his theme, Ben Sira tells us: "The wisdom of a scribe cometh by his time of leisure: and he that is less in action shall receive wisdom."[1] This presupposes that the time thus gained is profitably spent. There then follows a series of the most striking labor panels, each representing some particular form of agricultural or industrial occupation common in his day. Ben Sira says:

> With what wisdom shall he be furnished that holdeth the plow, and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth the oxen therewith, and is occupied in their labors, and his talk is about the offspring of bulls? He shall give his mind to turn up furrows, and his care is to give the kine fodder.
>
> So every craftsman and workmaster that laboreth night and day, he who maketh graven seals, and by his continual diligence varieth the figure; he shall give his mind to the resemblance of the picture, and his watching shall finish the work.
>
> So doth the smith sitting by the anvil and considering the iron work. The vapor of the fire wasteth his flesh, and he fighteth with the heat of the furnace. The noise of the hammer is always in his ears, and his eye is upon the pattern of the vessel he maketh. He setteth his mind to finish his work, and his watching to polish it to perfection.
>
> So doth the potter sitting at his work, turning the wheel about with his feet, who is always carefully set to his work, and making all his work by number. He fashioneth the clay with his arm, and boweth down his

[1] Ecclus. xxxviii. 25.

strength before his feet. He shall give his mind to finish the glazing, and his watching to make clean the furnace.[2]

With a discerning eye Ben Sira had passed among the workers. He knew their ways and their works. He describes with minute exactness the condition of the toiler as he saw him in those latter and often exceedingly bitter years of Jewish history. Bent over his task the laborer did not partake in the assembly, nor did he sit in the seat of judgment, nor was he found where parables were spoken, although without him the city could not be built nor men dwell and walk about therein. Such are the added details Ben Sira gives us. Yet these workers, he is at pains to make clear, were not to be blind to the law of God, and even the very performance of their daily task might, by a true supernatural motive, be turned into a prayer. In a natural way they were a strong support of all civilization, for says the sacred writer: "They shall strengthen the state of the world, and their prayer shall be in the work of their craft, applying their soul and searching in the law of the most High."[3]

Well worth our study, therefore, are these pictures drawn with such skill and insight by the son of Sirach. We here behold the life of the worker brought close and made real to us, as he plied his task over 2,000 years ago: the plowman in the field, the artist in his studio, the smith at his forge, the potter at his wheel, each one trusting in the deftness of his hands, and each one "wise in his own art."

Now, as then, the workers, following the Apostolic direction to do all things for the glory of God, can turn into prayer "the work of their craft." By this they are making possible the continuance of civilization. Their labors are no less necessary for sustaining "the state of the world" than are the functions of government or the duties of those whose lot it is to occupy the exalted seat of judgment.

Yet there is another lesson not to be overlooked. It is perhaps the first to force itself upon us as we reflect on these vivid labor panels of more than two millenniums ago. It is this: that wise consideration of them should strengthen our efforts to secure for

[2] Ecclus. xxxviii. 26–34.

[3] Ecclus. xxxviii. 39.

the toiler reasonable conditions of work and hours of labor that are not too long and too exhausting. We must strive to make possible for him not merely a true family life and the full, free practice of religion, but see that he is accorded also the cultural opportunities that a rightly regulated industrial order can afford him. We must remember that even these Jewish laborers had their Sabbath preserved inviolate from labor, and the law still further provided for them a number of religious holidays far beyound our modern conception. If that law was not always held in honor, religion at least had performed its great and noble function in raising its voice and exerting its utmost power to safeguard the worker against the greed of masters willing to paganize and brutalize labor, then as now, for the sake of their own selfish gain.

Religion, in fact, was the one stay of the Hebrew workers, who appear never to have organized themselves economically for the defense of their rights or the promotion of their interests. This is true at least of the Hebrew in Palestine. Nor is it surprising if we remember that the Jews never became an industrial people, but remained mainly devoted to agricultural and pastoral pursuits. It should further be recalled that the pre-Christian labor unions, even in Rome itself all turned out to be of practically no economic value for the safeguarding of labor rights, because of distressing competition with slave labor.

Some believe that the existence of labor gilds is implied in the Scriptures, since we read in the first book of Paralipomenon or Chronicles of a labor colony in the "Valley of artificers,"[4] consisting of descendants of Othoniel. The generic Hebrew word used here for artificers may refer indifferently to stone-cutters, carpenters or ironsmiths.

So again we are informed, further on, of "the families of the houses of them that wrought fine linen in the House of Oaths," *i.e.*, near Beth Eshba: and of the potters who "dwelled in Plantations and Hedges [*i.e.*, in Netaim and Gedera], with the king for his works, and they abode there."[5] These were potters of King David or of one of his successors. They were settled at a

[4] I. Paralip. iv. 14.
[5] I. Paralip. iv. 21, 23.

place conveniently near Jerusalem, as we may suppose, and in a locality affording them the best material for their craft. They may have been brought there by the king himself when he made them his royal potters.

In none of these instances is there any indication of an economic organization in the sense of a labor union. These men were simply plying their trades in the same locality, possibly with some degree of industrial cooperation. They may quite probably have had their chosen spokesmen to present their grievances to the king, or their requests for higher wages, as the case might be. But the Scripture itself affirms no more than the existence of these labor colonies. Referring to the general tendency of the craftsmen in the Middle Ages to produce their commodities in the places where they were needed for consumption, Mr. R. Austin Freeman explains that even then: "exceptions occurred in industries such as that of the potter, which were dependent upon locally available material." To satisfy a large demand, such as that of the royal court of Juda, a community of potters naturally chose a locality geologically suited for their trade.

From the Talmudic literature of a far later period we learn of coppersmiths and embossers who had their own synagogues.[6] In Alexandria the various trades, such as weavers, silversmiths, goldsmiths and embossers kept apart in separate sections of the common synagogue.[7] Trade organizations for the protection of mutual economic interests may therefore, in all probability, have existed. It was a time when gild organization was not unknown among the Greeks and the Romans. We remember, too, the uproar caused by the pagan silversmiths of Ephesus, when the preaching of the Gospel promised to interfere with the sale of the idols manufactured by them. Agitation against the Christians had been active in the silversmiths union then as it has in modern times been carried on in countless Socialist labor unions. But in the Old Testament land, and in the Old Testament times there is no evidence of trade unions or craft gilds in the strict

[6] Meg. 26a. Naz. 52a.
[7] Suk. 51 p.

sense of these terms. The conditions, in fact, hardly existed that made them possible.

Better than the condition of either the Jewish or the modern laborer was that of the master craftsman of the Middle Ages. His position was one of dignity and honor such as labor never enjoyed before or after. His hands not only erected the majestic cathedrals, unequalled in our age, but with the same skill wrought the smallest article for common use, often making of it truly a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

For the corporate use of his own gildfellowship he constructed the beautiful gild halls, one of the glories of the Ages of Faith and lasting monuments of labor's cultural achievements, where he and his fellows met for joyful feast and solemn ceremony. His plays and pageants were civic art at its highest and best. He saw in clear vision the truths of another world and with consummate craftsmanship expressed his radiant ideals in the splendor of Gothic windows and the wonderful carvings that still remain to us in wood and stone. A recent writer, with no leanings towards religion in any form, speaks of him as rising by his work to become the associate of kings:

> In those days a craftsman was a great man, great in proportion to his mastery of his craft. If his abilities were great a splendid career was open to him, he might become a master craftsman, an associate of kings, ranking with nobles and ministers of State; such a man for instance, as Master Henry of Westminster, the King's Mason, or Master Alexander, the King's Carpenter; men who for all their greatness, had served their time and could give the best of journeymen a lead; whose work, still surviving, we view to-day with awe as the creation of a race of giants. (R. Austin Freeman, "Social Decay and Regeneration," p. 182.)

Yet even in our own day the laborer may often realize his high ambitions and become a potent influence for good. Not seldom are his brightest dreams fulfilled in the children that he rears. How many, indeed, of the world's noblest minds are the offspring of humble homes, and how many of its mighty leaders are the sons of working-class parents who bravely fostered in their children and transmitted to them their lofty ideals, even amid hardships and privations! Standing before the home of his boyhood days, on whose walls the citizens were then placing a memorial tablet in his honor, the great Pasteur exclaimed:

O my father, my mother, dear departed ones, who lived so humbly in this house, it is to you that I owe everything. Thy enthusiasm, my brave-hearted mother, thou hast instilled into me. . . . And thou, dearest father, whose life was as hard as thy trade, thou hast shown to me what patience and protracted labor can accomplish. It is to thee that I owe perseverance in daily work. Not only hadst thou the qualities which go to make a useful life, but also admiration for great men and great things. To look upward, to bend all my powers that I might rise to ever higher things, such was thy teaching.

Labor, above all, is not debarred from the very highest reaches of divine wisdom as we behold it in that model of all workers, Joseph, the foster-father of our Lord. What patriarch or prophet or teacher in Israel approached so close to the very fountain-source of wisdom as this humble, life-long toiler. From the lips of Joseph the carpenter, as from the lips of Mary, the lowly working-class maid, wife and mother, did Christ, the Infinite Wisdom, wish to hear the traditions of His people and the inspired thoughts which He himself had placed long centuries ago in the hearts of prophet and of psalmist. Yet all the days of Joseph were spent in "laborious works," with Mary his humble spouse, and the laboring Christ.

Chapter XXII

LABOR IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Any study of the labor question in the New Testament must be concerned, first and foremost, with the person of the great Messias. Whom do we consider the Son of Man to be? Our whole study depends on that. With Peter we answer: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."[1] Foretold to Adam after the Fall,[2] more clearly revealed to Patriarch and Prophet, He came at the time made known to Daniel[3] and in the place pointed out by Micheas:

> And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda; out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel; and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity.[4]

Begotten from eternity, very God of very God, He chose for His lineage the royal House of David. But as Jacob foretold,[5] He was to come only when the scepter should have passed from the hands of its rulers. Not in the marble palace of Solomon did He wish to make His abode, but in Bethlehem's abandoned stable and in the obscure dwelling of the carpenter of Nazareth, Joseph, the man of God, royal of heart, chosen out of all the generations for the Foster-father of the Word Incarnate, yet in the eyes of the world merely a unit among the unknown millions of labor.

Of a maiden-mother was Christ to be born, since only of a pure virgin could the word *almah* in the Isaian prophecy of the Messias be understood: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and

[1] Matt. xvi. 16.
[2] Gen. iii. 15.
[3] Dan. ix. 24–26.
[4] Mich. v. 2.
[5] Gen. xlix. 10.

bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel,"[6] *i.e.*, "God with us." Yet though, like Joseph, of kingly lineage, she too was to be of lowly estate, the humble wife of a laborer whose hands were rough with daily toil.

As for Christ Himself, the Incarnate God, how full of meaning for Him the words of the Psalmist, as so frequently they must have fallen from His lips in the congregation of His people: "I am poor and in labors from my youth"![7]

The English versions of the Scripture plainly describe the trade of Joseph as that of a carpenter. Amazed at the wisdom and miracles of Jesus His town folk asked regarding Him: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" and again: "Is not this the carpenter?" The word *faber*, used in the Latin version, for a time led to various suggestions that Joseph might possibly have rather been a smith or even a mason, but the Greek word *tekton*, in its particular context and evidently referring to a definite trade, is now accepted as accurately rendered by the term "carpenter."

Into the home of a manual worker, therefore, the Eternal Word wished to be born. The trade which Joseph practised He too followed, and in the declining days of His Foster-father, and after the death of Joseph which is believed to have taken place before Christ's public ministry, He must have been the sole bread-winner in that little house of Nazareth, where Mary quietly did her household duties: spinning the wool, spreading the frugal board, and keeping all things pure and neat by the labor of her hands. Did we learn nothing more regarding labor from the New Testament, we would have evidence enough to raise it to the summit of dignity and glory by its association with the God-Man.

That at the opening of His public ministry Christ must have discontinued any regular practice of His trade seems clear. His time was now intensely occupied with instructing His Apostles, teaching the people, and going about doing good. His disciples were instructed by Him to eat and drink of whatever was set before them in the houses to which they brought their

[6] Isaias vii. 14.
[7] Ps. lxxxii. 16.

blessing of peace: "For the laborer is worthy of his hire."[8] Of Christ Himself we are told that certain women whom He had healed, Mary Magdalen, Joanna the wife of Herod's steward, Susanna and many others, "ministered to him of their substance."[9]

Idleness, the mother of vices, had no place in His teaching: "My Father worketh until now; and I work."[10] All honest labor, of head or hand, was held in honor by Him. The one-talent man, who in place of utilizing the gift bestowed on him in stewardship, hid it away in a napkin, aroused the divine indignation as well as Dives who wasted his wealth in carousing. "Wicked and slothful servant," the former is called in the parable,[11] while on the other hand the folly of "a certain rich man," whose plentiful harvest overflowed his barns, is thus dramatically described:

> And he said: This will I do, I will pull down my barns, and will build greater; and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods.
>
> And I will say to my soul: Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest; eat, drink and make good cheer.
>
> But God said to him: Thou fool, this night do I require thy soul of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?[12]

Translated into modern terminology, this is the business man who having made large dividends adds them to his capital stock, but without a thought of the stewardship in which all money must be held and used. His wife in the same manner thinks only of pleasure or social success, as if her wealth belonged to her to do with as she pleased. The same spirit may perhaps be found in son or daughter, with sport, luxury or worldly ambition their main objectives in life. Here, then, is the ruin of an entire family. Hence the reflection of Christ on the rich young man whom He really loved and who had hitherto, indeed, fully observed the law though he sorrowfully turned from Christ's invitation to renounce his riches and follow Him:

[8] Luke x. 7.
[9] Luke viii. 2, 3.
[10] John v. 17.
[11] Matt. xxv. 26.
[12] Luke xii. 18–20.

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! . . .

It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.[13]

Yet by the grace of God, and the rich man's correspondence with it, Christ tells us, such a thing is possible, "for all things are possible with God."[14] But in the kingdom of Christ he who would be greater among his brethren must be their minister, and he who would be the first must be the servant of all: "For the Son of man also is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many."[15]

Wealth, power and genius are in themselves no disqualification with God, but neither are they any recommendation. He gives His grace to the humble, but on the great in their own estimation He looks from afar off. Even sinners, publicans, tax-gatherers, whom the self-righteous shunned, attracted the regard of Christ and He accepted their invitations to the scandal of the Pharisees. The souls of rich and poor were alike precious to Him, and we must not forget that even among His closest friends some at least were fairly well to do. The father of John and James was in a position to employ hired help, and Lazarus, at whose death Christ wept, was evidently a man of means. Zacheus, whose house He visited, was rich, but if he had wronged anyone he restored him fourfold.

In His own life Our Lord was most intimately connected with the labor world. Into this He willed to be born, in this He toiled, from this He chose His Apostles, to this He particularly appealed in His imagery, by this He was followed in crowds made up for the great part of slaves and the city proletariat, shepherds and herdsmen, fishermen and farmers, and in general of much the same gathering that under changed conditions finds its place around Him to-day where he dwells in their midst in His Eucharistic Presence, in countless Catholic churches through city, town and country.

Standing out prominently in the parables of Our Lord is the

[13] Mark x. 23, 25.
[14] Mark x. 27.
[15] Mark x. 45.

doctrine of stewardship. Employer and employed, rich and poor, capitalist and laborer, the multi-millionaire and the poor scrub-woman cleaning his office by night, are all alike in their general position the fellow servants of God. No one may despise, no one may envy the other. There is but one Master in the great household of God where all men are His servants, equally responsible to Him for all they do and in particular for the use they make of the position or talents entrusted to them. There can be question only of one servant set over another, of one receiving more, another fewer, talents to administer. No one is free to do as he pleases, all must consult in all things the divine will. God's own infinite attributes forbid Him to yield up His ultimate right of disposition over any created things.

The servant set over his fellow servants: the employer, the capitalist, the foreman or whatever his rank, is responsible to the divine Householder not merely for the use he makes of his own time and means, but also for the perfect fulfilment of the duties assigned him regarding his fellow servants: for the hire apportioned to them, the working conditions provided them, the moral surroundings secured for them, the reasonable possibilities of a worthy human existence and a perfect service of God given to them and their families. The laborer's position, in turn, is obviously far easier and his responsibility far less, but he too is bound to the complete and accurate fulfilment of his own obligations.

Above all things Christ demands the most perfect mutual love, forbearance and consideration among God's fellow servants. In two Commandments He has summed up all the law and the prophets: the Commandments of the love of God and the love of our neighbor, but in loving our neighbor for the love of God, as indeed we are bound to do, we embrace both Commandments in one. This, therefore, is the law of Christ in all our industrial and commercial as well as social and domestic relations: service through love, and that love ultimately motived in our love of God above all things.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength.

This is the first commandment. And the second is like to it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.[16]

In dealing with the principles on the mutual relations between capital and labor, between employer and employed, as implicitly taught by Christ and reflected throughout the New Testament, we must understand that everything of social and cultural value in the Old Dispensation has, in one way or another, been retained in the New.

The Mosaic legislation did not express the perfect legislative ideal in the mind of God, but often aimed merely to mitigate an evil that could not at once be abolished in the ordinary course of Providence. Christ also showed consideration for the weakness of humanity, but at the same time He taught fully the perfect ideal, as summed up in His two Great Commandments of love. He went still further and added what was most peculiarly His own Commandment:

This is my commandment, that you love one another, *as I have loved you.* Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do the things that I command you. I will not now call you servants.[17]

The love, then, we are to have for our neighbor, a love to which industry and commerce may set no limits, is the love wherewith Christ loved us. Apply this to our industrial relations and forthwith all our problems of real moment are solved. Difficulties, such as must always arise, could not fail of ultimate adjustment in an atmosphere of friendship and brotherhood, where employer and employed recognize each other as fellow servants of God, and where their perfect observance of God's will would win for them from the lips of Christ the endearing name of "friends." There is the Christian solution and the only solution of the labor problem. The more closely we attain to this, the nearer are we to domestic, social, economic, national and international peace, cooperation and happiness. Christ did not come to raise a standard of revolution, political or industrial. His kingdom, He plainly stated, "is not of this world."[18] He

[16] Mark xii. 30, 31.
[17] John xv. 12–15.
[18] John xviii. 36.

did not come to preach a system of economics, nor yet directly to attack any of existing systems of His own day. It was entirely sufficient that His doctrine should gradually produce its effect, wherever men would accept it in spirit and in truth.

Thus the existing system of slavery, upon which the entire economic order in the Roman world was then based, could not have been abolished save by a tremendous and continued miracle, such as it was not in the divine Providence to work. Naturally speaking, as I have previously stated, an uprising of slaves could have terminated in no other way than in the crucifixion of thousands and the increased misery for the branded survivors. And who were the handful of Christians to revolutionize the world in a deluge of blood? Such was not the reason for Christ's coming.

To save the souls of men and win them for the service of God was the purpose of His mission. In the Church, His spiritual kingdom, the only institution He came to found, there is no distinction of slave or free, but all are one in Him:

> For you are all the children of God by faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.[19]

Christ did not come to abolish class and rank, any more than He came to abolish nationality and sex, but He came to preach a doctrine of salvation which of itself sufficed to abolish slavery and today suffices to transform our entire social and economic system if men will in principle and practice accept His teaching. Christianity has never failed, but the world has failed for not accepting and applying it. Twice in the history of the world the Catholic Church, with nothing but the pure and complete deposit of the Faith left her by Christ and His Apostles, has transformed the world, and within her is the same inherent power to transform it again today.

Christ, without directly attacking the existing economic institution, raised the slave to the full stature of a man and to the sublime dignity and glory of a child of God. Well might the unfree ambition his freedom, but while in bonds he was to serve

[19] Gal. iii. 26–28.

his master, yet now solely for the love and service of God. Thus was his work sublimated, divinized so to speak, all the dross turned into gold. It was no illusion, no idle dream which would be dissipated with the call to another day of unremunerated labor, but an eternal verity. The day, in fact, would come when, by the power of the transcendent teaching of the God-Man, all his shackles would be stricken from him.

Christ's love for His brethren in bondage we see reflected in the tenderness of St. Paul towards the runaway slave Onesimus of whom he had made a Christian and whom he begs his master Philemon to receive:

> Not now as a servant, but instead of a servant, a most dear brother, especially to me: but how much more to thee both in the flesh and in the Lord? If therefore thou count me a partner, receive him as myself. And if he hath wronged thee in any thing, or is in thy debt, put that to my account.
>
> I Paul have written it with my own hand: I will repay it: not to say to thee, that thou owest me thy own self.[20]

Need we wonder at the attraction Christianity exercised for the servile classes to whom it imparted so great a moral dignity, and whom it admitted to its sacred mysteries on exactly the same footing with master and mistress, now all made one in Christ. As the historian Lecky writes:

> The multitude of slaves who embraced the new Faith was one of the reproaches of the pagans, and the names of Blandina, Potamiaena, Eutyches, Victorinus and Nereus show how fully they shared in the suffering and in the glory of martyrdom. The first and grandest edifice of Byzantine architecture in Italy, the noble church of St. Vital at Ravenna, was dedicated by Justinian to the memory of a martyred slave.[21]

The honor given by Our Lord to labor of every kind has been sufficiently indicated. St. Paul could say of his ministry that he was chargeable to no man: "And we labor, working with our hands."[22] Coming to Corinth, he stayed with the Jew Aquila and his wife: "Because he was of the same trade, he remained with them, and worked—now they were tent-makers."[23] Yet

[20] Phil. 16–19.

[21] "History of Rationalism," II, p. 37.

[22] I Cor. iv. 12.

[23] Acts xviii. 3.

while he made this his personal practice, he clearly emphasized the general teaching of Christ: "So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel."[24]

On the just wage, the New Testament reiterates the doctrine of the Old. Terrible are the words of St. James concerning those of the rich who disregard the divine mandate and heartlessly oppress the poor:

> Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you.
>
> Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.
>
> Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days.
>
> Behold the hire of the laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back, crieth: and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.[25]

Obviously not all possessors of wealth, irrespective of the manner in which their riches were acquired and are administered, were meant to be included in this condemnation, but those only who are guilty before God.

The householder in Our Lord's parable,[26] who hired laborers for his vineyard, incurred the resentment of the men who had worked all the day, because he gave a full day's wage also to the others whom he called on finding them still unemployed at the later hours of the day. He understood that he was not in justice obliged to do so, but Our Lord evidently approved of his goodness. Yet even here the purpose of the parable was not an economic but a spiritual lesson. The greatness of our eternal reward is in the first place conditioned on the measure of God's grace that is an entirely free gift, unearned by us, although no one is denied sufficient grace for his salvation.

Of the so-called Communism of the early Church there is no reason why we should speak here, since it is not connected with the labor problem. Communism and Socialism, in the modern sense, are concerned with the common ownership of productive

[24] I Cor. ix. 14.
[25] James v. 1–4.
[26] Matt. xx. 1–16.

property. On the contrary, such of the early Christians, in the Church at Jerusalem, who wished to practise the community of goods referred to in the Acts of the Apostles, sold their productive property and gave the money into the hands of the Apostles that it might be distributed by them "to every one, according as he had need."[27] It was therefore but another form of renunciation and alms-giving in favor of those who stood most in need. The system was neither integrally nor essentially connected with Christianity as such; it was entirely optional, local and short-lived. Peter blamed Ananias only for the deception he practised and not for withholding part of the price of his land: "Whilst it remained, did it not remain to thee? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?"[28] He could have retained his land, or could have retained the price of it, and yet have been a member of that Christian community at Jerusalem.

That we might have eternal life was the purpose of Christ's coming. At the price of His blood He purchased salvation for all who would faithfully cooperate with His light and grace. He taught no social system; He outlined no plan of economic reconstruction; but He left a doctrine of divine love, fidelity to which can alone bring to the world justice, charity, cooperation, brotherhood, a desire of service above profits, a zeal for souls above dividends, an emulation on the part of employer and worker to promote each others' welfare, a readiness on the part of both to consult the public interest before their own advantages, and finally the firm determination to seek above all else the things of God and of His kingdom.

[27] Acts iv. 35.
[28] Acts v. 4.

APPENDIX

I. Douay and King James Versions
II. The Study of Holy Scripture: An Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII

I

DOUAY AND KING JAMES VERSIONS

An explanation of certain differences between the so-called Douay and King James Versions of the Bible, in so far as they affect the present volume, will be of interest to readers of all denominations.

The Douay or Rheims Version was made directly from the Latin Vulgate, although not without careful comparison with the Hebrew and Greek texts. This Latin Version has now been in use within the Catholic Church for 1,500 years, and was probably more pure than any of the texts in the original languages extant at the time the Douay translation was begun, in 1578. The originals themselves had been lost long before that date. The Version was edited with scrupulous care by the ecclesiastical authorities to bring it as closely as possible back to the text partly revised and partly translated by St. Jerome, who had completed his work in the year 405.

"There are in this circumstance two things which could recommend the work in question to the serious examination of the critic," says Dr. George Campbell. "The first is that this Version, having been made from manuscripts more ancient than the greater part, or even than the whole, of those which remain to us, it occupies, to a certain extent, the place of these manuscripts, and furnished us with a probable means for discovering what were the readings which Jerome found in the copies which he had collected with so much care. The second is that, having been completed long before the rise of those controversies which are the foundation of most of the sects at present existing, it is, we may rest assured, exempt from all party influences."

The Douay Version, then, was made from this Latin text with the utmost fidelity, to such an extent in fact that one of its chief blemishes was the extreme literalness of the translation. But

this could then be reckoned as almost a virtue, in so far as its main purpose was to correct the false impressions produced by the many erroneous translations in circulation at that time, and often mistranslated simply that they might serve as an argument against the old Faith.

The main labor of this great task fell upon Dr. Gregory Martin, who was doubtless counted among the best Greek and Hebrew scholars of his day. "October 16th, or thereabouts," reads a marginal note in the Douay Diary for 1578, "Mr. Martin, Licentiate, began the translation of the Bible into English." Dr. Martin was one of the Foundation scholars of St. John's Oxford. Associated with him were Dr. Allen, who had been Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, before he was obliged to flee for his religion; Richard Bristow, who with Campion had been the bright particular light of Oxford, and who together with him had represented the University in a disputation before Elizabeth; and finally John Reynolds and Thomas Worthington, both Oxford men of the best scholarly attainments.

The Douay College had at that time been transferred to Rheims, and the entire translation of both the New and the Old Testament was made there. The New Testament was published in 1582, but the Old, for lack of funds and because of "our poor estate in banishment," was issued only in 1609 and 1610. The Douay translation of the New Testament, as we know, was actually in the hands of the King James translators and was in fact liberally turned to account by them. Even several Protestant editions of this so-called "Catholic Bible" have been issued.

The present "Douay Bible," in common use by Catholics in English-speaking countries, is the result of a series of revisions by Bishop Challoner, whose editions of the New and Old Testament appeared respectively in 1749 and 1750. In Cardinal Newman's view, the revisions "almost amounted to a new translation." There are various slightly modified editions of this revised Douay Bible.

The "Authorized" or "King James" Version, often called the "Protestant Version," was made directly from the Greek and Hebrew texts by a body of fifty-four eminent Greek and Hebrew

scholars, divided in six groups. Soon after its appearance, however, as early as 1611, proposals for a revision were urged, and committees for this purpose were actually appointed both in 1642 and again in 1655. The Revision itself was not begun until 1870. In accuracy it is superior to the old translation. In the New Testatment alone the number of alterations based upon a more critical Greek text than had been used under King James, amounted in all to 36,000. But the Revision, too, was far from meeting with universal recognition or even acceptance.

It is not my purpose, as implied at the beginning, to compare and contrast the Douay and the King James Versions, but to indicate certain differences that should be noted for the sake of clearness.

In the first place there is a difference in the names of some of the Old Testament books. Both English Versions now in use recognize a variation in the titles of the four books classed in the Hebrew text as two Books of Samuel and two Books of Kings. In the Greek Septuagint, the earliest of all translations, these were all grouped together under the title of the four books of "Kingdoms." In the early Church they were known simply as the four Books of Kings. I have used the Hebrew nomenclature, wherever reference is made to them in this volume, and in parenthesis have then inserted the Patristic numeration of the four Books of Kings.

Again I have had frequent occasion to refer to the First and Second Book of Paralipomenon. In the Anglican Authorized Version these are given under the title of the First and Second Book of Chronicles.

There is a particular complication in the numeration of the Psalms. Each of the two Psalms ix and cxiii of the Greek, Latin and Douay Versions is divided into two separate Psalms in the Hebrew text and in the King James Version made from it. The difference in number which thus ensues is rectified when Psalms cxiv and cxv, as well as Psalms cxlvi and cxlvii of the former Versions, are respectively combined into one. A total of 150 Psalms is thus ultimately found in each Version.

Especial reference should be made to the inclusion in this volume of frequent citations both from the Book of Ecclesias-

ticus, called so because of its constant use in the Early Church, and also from the Book of Wisdom. The abbreviated notation for the former is "Ecclus."

From a purely historical point of view, as products of the Machabean Age, these books are of great value in connection with our subject. They are not in the King James Version because not found in the Canon of the Palestinian Jews. They were, however, in the Alexandrian Canon. This embraces the books contained in the so-called "Greek Jewish Bible." They were in use also by Our Lord and His Apostles. Frequent traces of them can be found in the original text of the New Testament.

The Greek Septuagint, which included them, was the Scripture almost exclusively quoted by St. Paul and of course was the only Scripture in use by the Early Fathers of the Church, of whom, excepting Origen, hardly any were even slightly acquainted with Hebrew. In the Church their canonicity was declared as early as the Council of Hippo, in 393, and confirmed by the Council of Carthage in 397. Even St. Jerome, in his later commentaries, quotes the Deuterocanonical Books as authoritative. Among Protestants they are known as Apocryphal.

Without entering upon any discussion, the attitude of Catholics can be very briefly stated. The entire Bible, or any particular book of the Bible, cannot decide its own canonicity or inspiration. This decision is given for them by the Church which Christ established as the infallible teacher of religious truth. The Spirit of God promised her for all time and the guiding presence of Christ cannot, therefore, permit her to go astray when thus deciding for all the Faithful in matters of faith and morals. "And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii: 20).

Similarly the Church has decided that the Latin Vulgate, from which the Douay Version was made, is free from error in these same matters, and can therefore be safely followed. This, however, does not imply freedom from textual errors. The contrary was plainly implied by the Holy See in undertaking the revised, corrected and typical edition now under preparation. As for the English translations by Catholics, neither the Douay nor any other of the many Catholic Versions has ever been approved

or disapproved by the Holy See. Thus in the present volume the Douay Version has been used, but not without considerable liberty where this was justified by comparison with the Latin, Greek or Hebrew texts. Catholics, of course, must have ecclesiastical permission to read any version not containing episcopal approval. The reasonableness of such a regulation as a safeguard against error is obvious.

There have been many different Catholic versions of the Bible or parts of the Bible into English. Attempts also have been made at translations directly from the original languages. The model for work of this kind is the French "Crampon" Version, begun by Canon Crampon and ultimately edited in collaboration by the Jesuits and the Professors of Sainte-Sulpice. Under direction of the Biblical Institute at Rome, a new Italian version from the original texts is also in preparation at the present writing, the scholarly version of the Pentateuch having already appeared. An excellent English translation from the original languages has, moreover, been begun in the Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures, issued by the Jesuit Fathers Cuthbert Lattey and Joseph Keating.

Attention must be finally called to considerable differences in the translation of proper names. The Greek endings are predominant in the Douay, which derived them through the Latin, while the Hebrew forms are used with more or less consistency in the Anglican Authorized Version. Thus we have Isaias in the Douay, and Isaiah in the King James Version, while the Hebrew name in reality is *Yesha'-yahu*. Owing to the persecution and banishment inflicted upon Catholics at the time the Douay Version was made, when of the handful of priests educated at Douay more than 160 suffered martyrdom in England for their Faith by prison, fire or hangman, the nomenclature adopted into English literature was naturally that of the King James Version. Under such stress the bulk of the English people had become Protestants.

For convenient reference, and as typical examples, I am here appending an alphabetical list of the more important proper names actually occurring in the present volume. The different

forms, as they are found today in the Douay and the Anglican Authorized Versions, are given side by side:

Douay	*King James*	*Douay*	*King James*
Achab	Ahab	Joachaz	Jehoahaz
Achaz	Ahaz	Joakim	Jehoiakim
Ahias	Ahijah	Josias	Josiah
Debbora	Deborah	Josue	Joshua
Elias	Elijah	Micheas	Micah
Eliseus	Elisha	Nehemias	Nehemiah
Esdras	Ezra	Osee	Hosea
Ezechias	Hezekiah	Ozias	Uzziah
Ezechiel	Ezekiel	Roboam	Rehoboam
Gedeon	Gideon	Sedecias	Zedekiah
Isaias	Isaiah	Sellum	Shallum
Jeremias	Jeremiah	Sem	Shem
Jezabel	Jezebel	Senaar	Shinar
Jezrahel	Jezreel	Sophonias	Zephaniah

An error into which the uninformed might readily fall would be to conclude that a version of the Old Testament, made directly from the Hebrew, must necessarily bring us always closer to the original than a version from the Latin Vulgate. The Rev. W. H. McClellan, Professor of Hebrew and Scripture at Woodstock College, dealing in *America* with the supposed advantages of an English Catholic version made from the Hebrew instead of the Vulgate, thus summarizes the entire situation:

"We should not always gain in accuracy by translating from the Hebrew rather than from the Vulgate. Our only Hebrew text, the Massoretic, is not older than the seventh Christian century. The Vulgate is two full centuries older, and it is past question that St. Jerome knew another and an older Hebrew text than that of the Massoretes, while his basic model, the Septuagint, shows trace of still earlier originals. St. Jerome's known conversance with the uses of textual criticism, his tireless industry in its pursuit, and his vantage ground fifteen centuries nearer the originals than our own, are elements in the problem which textual critics of all schools candidly acknowledge. The credit of the Vulgate today is such that some scholars regard it as, all things considered, the best extant version of the Scriptures."

II

THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

ENCYCLICAL "PROVIDENTISSIMUS DEUS" OF POPE LEO XIII

Introductory

The God of all Providence, who in the adorable designs of His love at first elevated the human race to the participation of the divine nature, and afterwards delivered it from universal guilt and ruin, restoring it to its primitive dignity, has, in consequence, bestowed upon man a splendid gift and safeguard—making known to him, by supernatural means, the hidden mysteries of His divinity, His wisdom and His mercy.

For although in divine revelation there are contained some things which are not beyond the reach of unassisted reason, and which are made the objects of such revelation in order "that all may come to know them with facility, certainty, and safety from error, yet not on this account can supernatural revelation be said to be absolutely necessary; it is only necessary because God has ordained man to a supernatural end."[1] This supernatural revelation, according to the belief of the universal Church, is contained both in unwritten tradition and in written books, which are, therefore, called sacred and canonical because, "being written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author, and as such have been delivered to the Church."[2]

This belief has been perpetually held and professed by the Church in regard to the books of both Testaments; and there are well known documents of the gravest kind, coming down to us from the earliest times, which proclaim that God, who

[1] Conc. Vat. sess. III, cap. ii, *de Revel.*
[2] *Ibid.*

spoke first by the Prophets, then by His own mouth, and lastly by the Apostles, composed also the canonical Scriptures,[3] and that these are His own oracles and words,[4] a Letter written by our Heavenly Father and transmitted by the sacred writers to the human race in its pilgrimage so far from its heavenly country.[5] If, then, such and so great is the excellence and the dignity of the Scriptures, that God Himself has composed them, and that they treat of God's marvelous mysteries, counsels and works, it follows that the branch of sacred theology, which is concerned with the defense and elucidation of these divine books, must be excellent and useful in the highest degree.

Now We, who by the help of God, and not without fruit, have by frequent Letters and exhortation endeavored to promote other branches of study which seemed capable of advancing the glory of God and contributing to the salvation of souls, have for a long time cherished the desire to give an impulse to the noble science of Holy Scripture, and to impart to Scripture study a direction suitable to the needs of the present day. The solicitude of the apostolic office naturally urges and even compels Us, not only to desire that this grand source of Catholic revelation should be made safely and abundantly accessible to the flock of Jesus Christ, but also not to suffer any attempt to defile or corrupt it, either on the part of those who impiously and openly assail the Scriptures, or of those who are led astray into fallacious and imprudent novelties.

We are not ignorant, indeed, Venerable Brethren, that there are not a few Catholics, men of talent and learning, who do devote themselves with ardor to the defense of the sacred writings and to making them better known and understood. But whilst giving to these the commendation they deserve, We cannot but earnestly exhort others also, from whose skill and piety and learning we have a right to expect good results, to give themselves to the same most praiseworthy work. It is Our wish and fervent

[3] S. Aug. *de Civ. Dei* xi, 3.

[4] S. Clem. Rom. 1 *ad Cor.* 45; S. Polycarp. *ad Phil.* 7; S. Iren. *Contra Haereses*, ii, 28, 2.

[5] S. Chrys. *in Gen.* hom. 2, 2; S. Aug. *in Ps.* 30, *serm.*, 2, 1; S. Greg. M. *ad Theod.* ep. iv, 31.

desire to see an increase in the number of the approved and persevering laborers in the cause of Holy Scripture; and more especially that those whom divine grace has called to Holy Orders, should, day by day, as their state demands, display greater diligence and industry in reading, meditating, and explaining it.

I. Profitable for Doctrine and Morality

Among the reasons for which the Holy Scripture is so worthy of commendation, in addition to its own excellence and to the homage which we owe to God's Word, the chief of all is, the innumerable benefits of which it is the source; according to the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost Himself, who says: "All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God, may be perfect, furnished to every good work."[1]

That such was the purpose of God in giving the Scripture to men is shown by the example of Christ our Lord and of His Apostles. For He Himself who "obtained authority by miracles, merited belief by authority, and by belief drew to Himself the multitude"[2] was accustomed in the exercise of His divine mission, to appeal to the Scriptures. He uses them at times to prove that He is sent by God, and is God Himself. From them He cites instructions for His disciples and confirmation of His doctrine. He vindicates them from the calumnies of objectors; He quotes them against Sadducees and Pharisees and retorts from them upon Satan himself when he dares to tempt Him. At the close of His life His utterances are from the Holy Scripture, and it is the Scripture that He expounds to His disciples after His resurrection, until He ascends to the glory of His Father.

Faithful to His precepts, the Apostles, although He Himself granted "signs and wonders to be done by their hands,"[3] nevertheless used with the greatest effect the sacred writings, in order to persuade the nations everywhere of the wisdom of Christianity,

[1] II Tim. iii. 16-17.
[2] S. Aug. *de Util. Cred.* xiv, 32.
[3] Acts xiv. 3.

to conquer the obstinacy of the Jews, and to suppress the outbreak of heresy. This is plainly seen in their discourses, especially in those of St. Peter; these were often little less than a series of citations from the Old Testament making in the strongest manner for the new dispensation. We find the same thing in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John and in the Catholic Epistles; and most remarkable of all in the words of him who "boasts that he learned the law at the feet of Gamaliel, in order that, being armed with spiritual weapons, he might afterwards say with confidence, 'the arms of our warfare are not carnal but mighty unto God.' "[4]

Let all, therefore, especially the novices of the ecclesiastical army, understand how deeply the sacred books should be esteemed, and with what eagerness and reverence they should approach this great arsenal of heavenly arms. For those whose duty it is to handle Catholic doctrine before the learned or the unlearned will nowhere find more ample matter or more abundant exhortation, whether on the subject of God, the supreme Good and the all-perfect Being, or of the works which display His glory and His love. Nowhere is there anything more full or more express on the subject of the Savior of the world than is to be found in the whole range of the Bible.

As St. Jerome says, "to be ignorant of the Scripture is not to know Christ."[5] In its pages His Image stands out, living and breathing; diffusing everywhere around consolation in trouble, encouragement to virtue, and attraction to the love of God. And as to the Church, her institutions, her nature, her office, and her gifts, we find in Holy Scripture so many references and so many ready and convincing arguments, that as St. Jerome again most truly says: "A man who is well grounded in the testimonies of the Scripture is the bulwark of the Church."[6] And if we come to morality and discipline, an apostolic man finds in the sacred writings abundant and excellent assistance; most holy precepts, gentle and strong exhortation, splendid examples of every virtue,

[4] S. Hier. *de Stud. Script. ad Paulin.* ep. liii, 3.
[5] *In Isaiam Prol.*
[6] *In Isaiam* 54:12.

and finally the promise of eternal reward and the threat of eternal punishment, uttered in terms of solemn import, in God's name and in God's own words.

And it is this peculiar and singular power of Holy Scripture, arising from the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which gives authority to the sacred orator, fills him with apostolic liberty of speech, and communicates force and power to his eloquence.

For those who infuse into their efforts the spirit and strength of the Word of God speak "not in word only but in power also, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much fullness."[7] Hence, those preachers are foolish and improvident who, in speaking of religion and proclaiming the things of God, use no words but those of human science and human prudence, trusting to their own reasonings rather than to those of God. Their discourses may be brilliant and fine, but they must be feeble and they must be cold, for they are without the fire of the utterance of God[8] and they must fall far short of that mighty power which the speech of God possesses: "for the Word of God is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword; and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit."[9] But, indeed, all those who have a right to speak are agreed that there is in the Holy Scripture an eloquence that is wonderfully varied and rich, and worthy of great themes. This St. Augustine thoroughly understood and has abundantly set forth. This, also, is confirmed by the best preachers of all ages, who have gratefully acknowledged that they owed their repute chiefly to the assiduous use of the Bible, and to devout meditation on its pages.

The holy Fathers well knew all this by practical experience, and they never cease to extol the sacred Scripture and its fruits. In innumerable passages of their writings we find them applying to it such phrases as "an inexhaustible treasury of heavenly doctrine," or "overflowing fountain of salvation," or putting it before us as fertile pastures and beautiful gardens in which the flock of the Lord is marvelously refreshed and delighted. Let

[7] 1 Thess. i. 5.
[8] Jerem. xxiii. 29.
[9] Hebr. iv. 12.

us listen to the words of St. Jerome, in his Epistle to Nepotian: "Often read the divine Scriptures; yea, let holy reading be always in thy hand; study that which thou thyself must preach. . . . Let the speech of the priest be ever seasoned with scriptural reading."[10] St. Gregory the Great, than whom no one has more admirably described the pastoral office, writes in the same sense. "Those," he says, "who are zealous in the work of preaching must never cease the study of the written Word of God."[11] St. Augustine, however, warns us that "vainly does the preacher utter the Word of God exteriorly unless he listens to it interiorly;"[12] and St. Gregory instructs sacred orators "first to find in Holy Scripture the knowledge of themselves, and then to carry it to others, lest in reproving others they forget themselves."[13] Admonitions such as these had, indeed, been uttered long before by the apostolic voice which had learnt its lesson from Christ Himself, who "began to do and teach." It was not to Timothy alone, but to the whole order of the clergy, that the command was addressed: "Take heed to thyself and to doctrine; be earnest in them. For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."[14] For the saving and for the perfection of ourselves and of others there is at hand the very best of help in the Holy Scriptures, as the Book of Psalms, among others, so constantly insists; but those only will find it who bring to this divine reading not only docility and attention, but also piety and an innocent life. For the sacred Scripture is not like other books. Dictated by the Holy Ghost, it contains things of the deepest importance, which, in many instances, are most difficult and obscure. To understand and explain such things there is always required the "coming" of the same Holy Spirit; that is to say, His light and His grace; and these, as the Royal Psalmist so frequently insists, are to be sought by humble prayer and guarded by holiness of life.

[10] S. Hier. *de Vita Cleric.* ad Nepot.
[11] S. Greg. M., *Regul. past.* ii, 11 (al. 22).
[12] S. Aug. *serm.* clxxix, 1.
[13] S. Greg. M. *Regul. Past,* iii, 24 (*al.* 48).
[14] 1 Tim. iv. 16.

II. Bible Cherished in the Church

It is in this that the watchful care of the Church shines forth conspicuously. By admirable laws and regulations, she has always shown herself solicitous that "the celestial treasure of the sacred books, so bountifully bestowed upon man by the Holy Spirit, should not lie neglected."[1] She has prescribed that a considerable portion of them shall be read and piously reflected upon by all her ministers in the daily office of the sacred psalmody. She has ordered that in cathedral churches, in monasteries, and in other convents in which study can conveniently be pursued, they shall be expounded and interpreted by capable men; and she has strictly commanded that her children shall be fed with the saving words of the Gospel at least on Sundays and solemn feasts.[2] Moreover, it is owing to the wisdom and exertions of the Church that there has always been continued, from century to century, that cultivation of Holy Scripture which has been so remarkable and has borne such ample fruit.

And here, in order to strengthen Our teaching and Our exhortations, it is well to recall how, from the beginning of Christianity, all who have been renowned for holiness of life and sacred learning, have given their deep and constant attention to Holy Scripture.

If we consider the immediate disciples of the Apostles, St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Polycarp, or the apologists, such as St. Justin and St. Irenaeus, we find that in their letters and their books, whether in defense of the Catholic Faith or in its commendation, they drew faith, strength, and unction from the Word of God. When there arose, in various sees, catechetical and theological schools, of which the most celebrated were those of Alexandria and of Antioch, there was little taught in those schools but what was contained in the reading, the interpretation, and the defense of the divine written word. From them came forth numbers of Fathers and writers whose laborious studies and admirable writings have justly merited for the three following centuries the appellation of the

[1] Conc. Trid. sess. v, *Decret. de reform.*, 1.
[2] *Ibid.* 1–2.

golden age of biblical exegesis. In the Eastern Church, the greatest name of all is Origen, a man remarkable alike for penetration of genius and for persevering labor; from whose numerous works and his great *Hexapla* almost all have drawn that came after him.

Others who have widened the field of this science may also be named, as especially eminent; thus, Alexandria could boast of St. Clement and St. Cyril; Palestine, of Eusebius and the other St. Cyril; Cappadocia, of St. Basil the Great and the two St. Gregories, of Nazianzus and Nyssa; Antioch, of St. John Chrysostom, in whom the science of Scripture was rivalled by the splendor of his eloquence. In the Western Church there were many names as great: Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, St. Leo the Great, St. Gregory the Great; most famous of all, St. Augustine and St. Jerome, of whom the former was so marvelously acute in penetrating the sense of God's Word and so fertile in the use that he made of it for the promotion of the Catholic truth, and the latter has received from the Church, by reason of his preeminent knowledge of Scripture and his labors in promoting its use, the name, "Great Doctor."

From this period down to the eleventh century, although biblical studies did not flourish with the same vigor and the same fruitfulness as before, yet they did flourish, and principally by the instrumentality of the clergy. It was their care and solicitude that selected the best and most useful things that the ancients had left, arranged them in order, and published them with additions of their own, as did St. Isidore of Seville, Venerable Bede, and Alcuin, among the most prominent; it was they who illustrated the sacred pages with "glosses" or short commentaries, as we see in Walafrid Strabo and St. Anselm of Laon, or expended fresh labor in securing their integrity, as did St. Peter Damian and Blessed Lanfranc. In the twelfth century many took up, with great success, the allegorical exposition of Scripture. In this kind, St. Bernard is preeminent; and his writings, it may be said, are Scripture all through.

With the age of the scholastics came fresh and welcome progress in the study of the Bible. That the scholastics were solicitous about the genuineness of the Latin version is evident from

the *Correctoria Biblica*, or lists of emendations, which they have left. But they expended their labors and industry chiefly on interpretation and explanation. To them we owe the accurate and clear distinction, such as had not been given before, of the various senses of the sacred words; the assignment of the value of each "sense" in theology; the division of books into parts, and the summaries of the various parts; the investigation of the objects of the writers; the demonstration of the connection of sentence with sentence, and clause with clause; all of which is calculated to throw much light on the more obscure passages of the sacred volume. The valuable work of the scholastics in Holy Scripture is seen in their theological treatises and in their Scripture commentaries; and in this respect the greatest name among them all is St. Thomas Aquinas.

When Our predecessor, Clement V, established chairs of Oriental literature in the Roman College and in the principal universities of Europe, Catholics began to make more accurate investigation on the original text of the Bible as well as on the Latin version. The revival amongst us of Greek learning, and, much more, the happy invention of the art of printing, gave a strong impetus to biblical studies. In a brief space of time, innumerable editions, especially of the Vulgate, poured from the press and were diffused throughout the Catholic world; so honored and loved was Holy Scripture during that very period against which the enemies of the Church direct their calumnies.

Nor must we forget how many learned men there were, chiefly among the religious orders, who did excellent work for the Bible between the Council of Vienna and that of Trent; men who, by the employment of modern means and appliances, and by the tribute of their own genius and learning, not only added to the rich stores of ancient times, but prepared the way for the succeeding century, the century which followed the Council of Trent, when it almost seemed that the great age of the Fathers had returned. For it is well known, and We recall it with pleasure, that Our predecessors, from Pius IV to Clement VIII caused to be prepared the celebrated editions of the Vulgate and the Septuagint, which, having been published by the command and authority of Sixtus V and of the same Clement, are

now in common use. At this time, moreover, were carefully brought out various other ancient versions of the Bible, and the Polyglots of Antwerp and of Paris, most important for the investigation of the true meaning of the text; nor is there any one book of either Testament which did not find more than one expositor, nor any grave question which did not profitably exercise the ability of many inquirers, among whom there are not a few—more especially of those who made most use of the Fathers—who have acquired great reputation. From that time downwards the labor and solicitude of Catholics has never been wanting; for as time went on, eminent scholars have carried on biblical study with success, and have defended Holy Scripture against *rationalism* with the same weapons of philology and kindred sciences with which it had been attacked. The calm and fair consideration of what has been said will clearly show that the Church has never failed in taking due measures to bring the Scriptures within reach of her children, and that she has ever held fast and exercised profitably that guardianship conferred upon her by Almighty God for the protection and glory of His holy Word; so that she has never required, nor does she now require, any stimulation from without.

III. Plan for Scripture Study

We must now, Venerable Brethren, as Our purpose demands, impart to you such counsels as seem best suited for carrying on successfully the study of biblical science.

But first it must be clearly understood whom we have to oppose and contend against, and what are their tactics and their arms. In earlier times the contest was chiefly with those who, relying on private judgment and repudiating the divine traditions and teaching office of the Church, held the Scriptures to be the one source of revelation and the final appeal in matters of faith. Now, we have to meet the Rationalists, true children and inheritors of the older heretics, who, trusting in their turn to their own way of thinking, have rejected even the scraps and remnants of Christian belief which had been handed down to them. They deny that there is any such thing as revelation or inspiration, or Holy Scripture at all; they see, instead, only

the forgeries and the falsehoods of men; they set down the Scripture narratives as stupid fables and lying stories: the prophecies and the oracles of God are to them either predictions made up after the event or forecasts formed by the light of nature; the miracles and the wonders of God's power are not what they are said to be, but the startling effects of natural law, or else mere tricks and myths; and the apostolic Gospels and writings are not the work of the Apostles at all.

These detestable errors, whereby they think they destroy the truth of the divine books, are obtruded on the world as the peremptory pronouncements of a certain newly-invented "free science," a science, however, which is so far from final that they are perpetually modifying and supplementing it.

And there are some of them who, notwithstanding their impious opinions and utterances about God, and Christ, the Gospels and the rest of Holy Scripture, would fain be considered both theologians and Christians, and men of the Gospel, and who attempt to disguise by such honorable name their rashness and their pride. To them we must add not a few professors of other sciences who approve their views and give them assistance and are urged to attack the Bible by a similar intolerance of revelation.

It is deplorable to see these attacks growing every day more numerous and more severe. It is sometimes men of learning and judgment who are assailed; but these have little difficulty in defending themselves from evil consequences. The efforts and the arts of the enemy are chiefly directed against the more ignorant masses of the people. They diffuse their deadly poison by means of books, pamphlets, and newspapers; they spread it by addresses and by conversation; they are found everywhere; and they are in possession of numerous schools, taken by violence from the Church, in which, by ridicule and scurrilous jesting, they pervert the credulous and unformed minds of the young to the contempt of Holy Scripture.

Should not these things, Venerable Brethren, stir up and set on fire the heart of every pastor, so that to this "knowledge, falsely so called,"[1] may be opposed the ancient and true science

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 20.

which the Church, through the Apostles, has received from Christ, and that Holy Scripture may find the champions that are needed in so momentous a battle?

Let our first care, then, be to see that in seminaries and academical institutions the study of Holy Scripture be placed on such a footing as its own importance and the circumstances of the time demand. With this view, the first thing which requires attention is the wise choice of professors. Teachers of sacred Scripture are not to be appointed at hap-hazard out of the crowd; but they must be men whose character and fitness are proved by their love of, and their long familiarity with the Bible, and by suitable learning and study.

It is a matter of equal importance to provide in time for a continuous succession of such teachers; and it will be well, wherever this can be done, to select young men of good promise who have successfully accomplished their theological course, and to set them apart exclusively for Holy Scripture, affording them facilities for full and complete studies. Professors, thus chosen and thus prepared may enter with confidence on the task that is appointed for them; and that they may carry out their work well and profitably, let them take heed to the instructions We now proceed to give.

At the commencement of the course of Holy Scripture let the professor strive earnestly to form the judgment of the young beginners so as to train them equally to defend the sacred writings and to penetrate their meaning. This is the object of the treatise which is called "Introduction." Here the student is taught how to prove the integrity and authority of the Bible, how to investigate and ascertain its true sense, and how to meet and refute objections. It is needless to insist upon the importance of making these preliminary studies in an orderly and thorough fashion, with the accompaniment and assistance of theology; for the whole subsequent course must rest on the foundation thus laid and make use of the light thus acquired.

Next, the teacher will turn his earnest attention to that more fruitful division of Scripture science which has to do with interpretation, wherein is imparted the method of using the Word of God for the advantage of religion and piety. We recog-

nize, without hesitation, that neither the extent of the matter nor the time at disposal allows each single book of the Bible to be separately gone through. But the teaching should result in a definite and ascertained method of interpretation—and, therefore, the professor should equally avoid the mistake of giving a mere taste of every book, and of dwelling at too great length on a part of one book. If most schools cannot do what is done in the large institutions—that is, take the students through the whole of one or two books continuously and with a certain development—yet at least those parts which are selected should be treated with suitable fullness; in such a way that the students may learn from the sample that is thus put before them to love and use the remainder of the sacred book during the whole of their lives.

The professor, following the tradition of antiquity, will make use of the Vulgate as his text; for the Council of Trent decreed that "in public lectures, disputations, preaching, and exposition,"[2] the Vulgate is the "authentic" version; and this is the existing custom of the Church. At the same time, the other versions, which Christian antiquity has approved, should not be neglected, more especially the more ancient MSS. For, although the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek is substantially rendered by the Vulgate, nevertheless, wherever there may be ambiguity or want of clearness, the "examination of older tongues,"[3] to quote St. Augustine, will be useful and advantageous. But in this matter we need hardly say that the greatest prudence is required, for the "office of a commentator," as St Jerome says, "is to set forth not what he himself would prefer, but what his author says."[4]

The question of "reading" having been, when necessary, carefully discussed, the next thing is to investigate and expound the meaning. And the first counsel to be given is this: that the more our adversaries contend to the contrary, so much the more solicitously should we adhere to the received and approved canons of interpretation. Hence, whilst weighing the meanings

[2] Sess. iv., *Decr. de Edit. et Usu Sacr. Libr.*
[3] *De Doctr. Chr.* iii, 4.
[4] *Ad Pammachium.*

of words, the connection of ideas, the parallelism of passages, and the like, we should by all means make use of such illustrations as can be drawn from apposite erudition of an external sort; but this should be done with caution, so as not to bestow on questions of this kind more labor and time than are spent on the sacred books themselves, and not to overload the minds of the students with a mass of information that will be rather a hindrance than a help.

IV. Interpretation and Application

The professor may now safely pass on to the use of Scripture in matters of theology. On this head it must be observed that, in addition to the usual reasons which make ancient writings more or less difficult to understand, there are some which are peculiar to the Bible. For the language of the Bible is employed to express, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, many things which are beyond the power and scope of the reason of man—that is to say, divine mysteries and all that is related to them. There is sometimes in such passages a fullness and a hidden depth of meaning which the letter hardly expresses and which the laws of interpretation hardly warrant. Moreover, the literal sense itself frequently admits other senses, adapted to illustrate dogma or to confirm morality.

Wherefore, it must be recognized that the sacred writings are wrapt in a certain religious obscurity, and that no one can enter into their interior without a guide;[1] God so disposing as the holy Fathers commonly teach, in order that men may investigate them with greater ardor and earnestness, and that what is attained with difficulty may sink more deeply into the mind and heart, and, most of all, that they may understand that God has delivered the Holy Scripture to the Church, and that in reading and making use of His Word, they must follow the Church as their guide and their teacher. St. Irenaeus long since laid down, that where the *charismata* of God were, there the truth was to be learned, and the Holy Scripture was safely interpreted by those who had the apostolic succession.[2]

[1] S. Hier. *ad Paulin. de Studio Script.* ep. liii, 4.
[2] *Contra Haereses*, iv, 26, 5.

His teaching, and that of other holy Fathers, is taken up by the Council of the Vatican, which in renewing the decree of Trent declares its "mind" to be this, that:

> In things of faith and morals, belonging to the building up of Christian doctrine, that is to be considered the true sense of Holy Scripture, which has been held and is held by our Holy Mother the Church, whose place it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures; and, therefore, that it is permitted to no one to interpret Holy Scriptures against such sense or also against the unanimous agreement of the Fathers.[3]

By this most wise decree the Church by no means prevents or restrains the pursuit of biblical science, but rather protects it from error, and largely assists its real progress. A wide field is still left open to the private student, in which his hermeneutical skill may display itself with signal effect and to the advantage of the Church. On the one hand, in those passages of Holy Scripture, which have not as yet received a certain and definite interpretation, such labors may, in the benignant providence of God, prepare for and bring to maturity the judgment of the Church; on the other, in passages already defined the private student may do work equally valuable, either by setting them forth more clearly to the flock and more skillfully to scholars, or by defending them more powerfully from hostile attack. Wherefore the first and dearest object of the Catholic commentator should be to interpret those passages which have received an authentic interpretation either from the sacred writers themselves, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost (as in many places of the New Testament), or from the Church, under the assistance of the same Holy Spirit, whether by her solemn judgment or her ordinary and universal *magisterium*[4]—to interpret these passages in that identical sense, and to prove by all the resources of science, that sound hermeneutical laws admit of no other interpretation.

In the other passages the analogy of faith should be followed, and Catholic doctrine, as authoritatively proposed by the Church,

[3] Sess. iii., cap. ii, *de Revel; cf.* Conc. Trid. sess. iv, *Decret. de Edit. et Usu Sacr. libr.*

[4] Conc. Vat. sess. III, cap. ii, *de Fide.*

should be held as the supreme law; for seeing that the same God is the author both of the sacred books and of the doctrine committed to the Church, it is clearly impossible that any teaching can, by legitimate means, be extracted from the former, which shall, in any respect, be at variance with the latter. Hence it follows that all interpretation is foolish and false which either makes the sacred writers disagree one with another, or is opposed to the doctrine of the Church.

The professor of Holy Scripture, therefore, amongst other recommendations, must be well acquainted with the whole circle of theology and deeply read in the commentaries of the holy Fathers and Doctors, and other interpreters of mark. This is inculcated by St. Jerome, and still more frequently by St. Augustine, who thus justly complains: "If there is no branch of teaching, however humble and easy to learn, which does not require a master, what can be a greater sign of rashness and pride than to refuse to study the books of the divine mysteries by the help of those who have interpreted them?"[5] The other Fathers have said the same, and have confirmed it by their example, for they "endeavored to acquire the understanding of the Holy Scriptures not by their own lights and ideas, but from the writings and authority of the ancients, who, in their turn, as we know, received the rule of interpretation in direct line from the Apostles."[6]

The holy Fathers "to whom, after the Apostles, the Church owes its growth—who have planted, watered, built, governed, and cherished it,"[7] the holy Fathers, We say, are of supreme authority, whenever they all interpret in one and the same manner any text of the Bible, as pertaining to the doctrine of faith or morals; for their unanimity clearly evinces that such interpretation has come down from the Apostles as a matter of Catholic faith. The opinion of the Fathers is also of very great weight when they treat of these matters in their capacity of Doctors unofficially; not only because they excel in their knowledge of revealed doctrine and in their acquaintance with many

[5] *De Util Cred.* xvii, 35.
[6] Rufinus *Hist. Eccl.* ii, 9.
[7] S. Aug. *c. Julian.* ii, 10, 37.

things which are useful in understanding the apostolic books, but because they are men of eminent sanctity and of ardent zeal for the truth, on whom God has bestowed a more ample measure of His light. Wherefore the expositor should make it his duty to follow their footsteps with all reverence, and to use their labors with intelligent appreciation.

But he must not on that account consider that it is forbidden, when just cause exists, to push inquiry and exposition beyond what the Fathers have done; provided he carefully observes the rule so wisely laid down by St. Augustine—not to depart from the literal and obvious sense, except only where reason makes it untenable or necessity requires;[8] a rule to which it is the more necessary to adhere strictly in these times, when the thirst for novelty and unrestrained freedom of thought make the danger of error most real and proximate.

Neither should those passages be neglected which the Fathers have understood in an allegorical or figurative sense, more especially when such interpretation is justified by the literal, and when it rests on the authority of many. For this method of interpretation has been received by the Church from the Apostles and has been approved by her own practice, as the Holy Liturgy attests; although it is true that the holy Fathers did not thereby pretend directly to demonstrate dogmas of faith, but used it as a means of promoting virtue and piety, such as, by their own experience, they knew to be most valuable. The authority of other Catholic interpreters is not so great; but the study of the Scriptures has always continued to advance in the Church, and, therefore, these commentaries also have their own honorable place, and are serviceable in many ways for the refutation of assailants and the explanation of difficulties.

But it is most unbecoming to pass by, in ignorance or contempt, the excellent work which Catholics have left in abundance, and to have recourse to the works of non-Catholics—and to seek in them, to the detriment of sound doctrine and often to the peril of faith, the explanation of passages on which Catholics long ago have successfully employed their talent and their labor. For although the studies of non-Catholics, used with prudence,

[8] *De Gen. ad Litt.* viii, 7, 13.

may sometimes be of use to the Catholic student, he should, nevertheless, bear well in mind—as the Fathers also teach in numerous passages[9] that the sense of Holy Scripture can nowhere be found incorrupt outside the Church, and cannot be expected to be found in writers who, being without the true faith, only gnaw the bark of the sacred Scripture, and never attain its pith.

Most desirable is it, and most essential, that the whole teaching of theology should be pervaded and animated by the use of the divine Word of God. This is what the Fathers and the greatest theologians of all ages have desired and reduced to practice. It was chiefly out of the sacred writings that they endeavored to proclaim and establish the Articles of Faith and the truths connected with it, and it was in them, together with divine tradition, that they found the refutation of heretical error, and the reasonableness, the true meaning, and the mutual relation of the truths of Catholicism.

Nor will any one wonder at this who considers that the sacred books hold such an eminent position among the sources of revelation that without their assiduous study and use, theology cannot be placed on its true footing, or treated as its dignity demands. For although it is right and proper that students in academies and schools should be chiefly exercised in acquiring a scientific knowledge of dogma, by means of reasoning from the Articles of Faith to their consequences, according to the rules of approved and sound philosophy, nevertheless the judicious and instructed theologian will by no means pass by that method of doctrinal demonstration which draws its proof from the authority of the Bible:

> For theology does not receive her first principles from any other science, but immediately from God by revelation. And, therefore, she does not receive of other sciences as from a superior, but uses them as her inferiors or handmaids.[10]

It is this view of doctrinal teaching which is laid down and recommended by the prince of theologians, St. Thomas of

[9] Cf. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vii, 16; Orig. *de Princ.* iv, 8; *in Lev.* hom. 4, 8; Tert., *de Praes.* 15; *S. Hilar. Pict. in Matt.* 13:1.

[10] S. Greg. M. *Moral.* xx, 9 (al. 11).

Aquin,[11] who, moreover, shows—such being the essential character of Christian theology—how she can defend her own principles against attack. He says:

> If the adversary do but grant any portion of the divine revelation, we have an argument against him; thus, against a heretic we can employ Scripture authority, and against those who deny one article, we can use another. But if our opponent reject divine revelation entirely, there is then no way left to prove the Articles of Faith by reasoning; we can only solve the difficulties which are raised against them.[12]

Care must be taken, then, that beginners approach the study of the Bible well prepared and furnished; otherwise, just hopes will be frustrated, or, perchance, what is worse, they will unthinkingly risk the danger of error, falling an easy prey to the sophisms and labored erudition of the Rationalists. The best preparation will be a conscientious application to philosophy and theology under the guidance of St. Thomas of Aquin, and a thorough training therein—as We Ourselves have elsewhere pointed out and directed. By this means, both in biblical studies and in that part of theology which is called *positive*, they will pursue the right path and make satisfactory progress.

V. Authority of Bible, Critics and Scientists

To prove, to expound, to illustrate Catholic doctrine by legitimate and skillful interpretation of the Bible is much; but there is a second part of the subject of equal importance and equal difficulty—the maintenance in the strongest possible way of its full authority. This cannot be done completely or satisfactorily except by means of the living and proper *magisterium* of the Church. The Church,

> by reason of her wonderful propagation, her distinguished sanctity and inexhaustible fecundity in good, her Catholic unity, and her unshaken stability, is herself a great and perpetual motive of credibility, and an unassailable testimony to her own divine mission.[1]

But since the divine and infallible *magisterium* of the Church rests also on the authority of Holy Scripture, the first thing to be

[11] *Summ. theol.* p. i, q. i, a. 5, ad 2.
[12] *Ibid.*, a. 8.
[1] Conc. Vat. sess. III, c. iii, *de Fide.*

done is to vindicate the trustworthiness of the sacred records, at least as human documents, from which can be clearly proved, as from primitive and authentic testimony, the divinity and mission of Christ our Lord, the institution of a hierarchical Church, and the primacy of Peter and his successors. It is most desirable, therefore, that there should be numerous members of the clergy well prepared to enter upon a contest of this nature, and to repulse hostile assaults, chiefly trusting in that armor of God recommended by the Apostle,[2] but also not unaccustomed to modern methods of attack. This is beautifully alluded to by St. John Chrysostom, when describing the duties of priests:

> We must use every endeavor that the "Word of God may dwell in us abundantly;" not merely for one kind of fight must we be prepared, for the contest is many-sided and the enemy is of every sort; and they do not all use the same weapons nor make their onset in the same way. Wherefore it is needful that the man who has to contend against all should be acquainted with the engines and the arts of all, that he should be at once archer and slinger, commandant and officer, general and private soldier, foot-soldier and horseman, skilled in sea-fight and in siege; for, unless he knows every trick and turn of war, the devil is well able, if only a single door be left open, to get in his fierce bands and carry off the sheep.[3]

The sophisms of the enemy and his manifolds arts of attack we have already touched upon. Let Us now say a word of advice on the means of defense.

The first means is the study of the Oriental languages and of the art of criticism. These two acquirements are in these days held in high estimation, and, therefore, the clergy, by making themselves more or less fully acquainted with them as time and place may demand, will the better be able to discharge their office with becoming credit; for they must make themselves all to all, always "ready to satisfy every one that asketh them a reason for the hope that is in them."[4] Hence it is most proper that professors of sacred scripture and theologians should master those tongues in which the sacred books were originally written; and it would be well that ecclesiastical students also should cultivate them, more especially those who aspire to academic degrees.

[2] Eph. vi. 13, sqq.
[3] *De Sacerdotio* iv, 4.
[4] 1 Peter iii. 15.

And endeavors should be made to establish in all academic institutions, as has already been laudably done in many, chairs of the other ancient languages, especially the Semitic, and of subjects connected therewith, for the benefit, principally, of those who are intended to profess sacred literature. These latter, with a similar object in view, make themselves well and thoroughly acquainted with the *art of true criticism.*

There has arisen, to the great detriment of religion, an inept method, dignified by the name of the "higher criticism," which pretends to judge of the origin, integrity, and authority of each book from internal indications alone. It is clear, on the other hand, that in historical questions, such as the origin and the handing down of writings, the witness of history is of primary importance, and that historical investigation should be made with the utmost care; and that in this matter internal evidence is seldom of great value, except as confirmation. To look upon it in any other light will be to open the door to many evil consequences. It will make the enemies of religion much more bold and confident in attacking and mangling the sacred books; and this vaunted "higher criticism" will resolve itself into the reflection of the bias and the prejudice of the critics. It will not throw on the Scripture the light which is sought or prove of any advantage to doctrine; it will only give rise to disagreement and dissension, those sure notes of error, which the critics in question so plentiful exhibit in their own persons; and seeing that most of them are tainted with false philosophy and rationalism, it must lead to the elimination from the sacred writings of all prophecy and miracles, and of everything else that is outside the natural order.

In the second place, we have to contend against those who, making an evil use of physical science, minutely scrutinize the sacred book in order to detect the writers in a mistake, and to take occasion to villify its contents. Attacks of this kind, bearing as they do on matters of sensible experience, are peculiarly dangerous to the masses, and also to the young who are beginning their literary studies; for the young, if they lose their reverence for the Holy Scripture on one or more points, are easily led to give up believing in it altogether.

It need not be pointed out how the nature of science, just as it is so admirably adapted to show forth the glory of the Great Creator, provided it be taught as it should be, so if it be perversely imparted to the youthful intelligence, it may prove most fatal in destroying the principles of true philosophy and in the corruption of morality. Hence, to the professor of sacred Scripture a knowledge of natural science will be of very great assistance in detecting such attacks on the sacred books, and in refuting them.

There can never, indeed, be any real discrepancy between the theologian and the physicist, as long as each confines himself within his own lines and both are careful, as St. Augustine warns us, "not to make rash assertions, or to assert what is not known as known."[5] If dissension should arise between them, here is the rule also laid down by St. Augustine for the theologian:

> Whatever they can really demonstrate to be true of physical nature we must show to be capable of reconciliation with our Scriptures; and whatever they assert in their treatises, which is contrary to these Scriptures of ours, that is to Catholic faith, we must either prove it as well as we can to be entirely false, or at all events we must without the smallest hesitation, believe it to be so.[6]

To understand how just is the rule here formulated we must remember, first, that the sacred writers, or to speak more accurately, the Holy Ghost "who spoke by them, did not intend to teach men these things (that is to say, the essential nature of the things of the visible universe), things in no way profitable unto salvation."[7] Hence, they did not seek to penetrate the secrets of nature, but rather described and dealt with things in more or less figurative language, or in terms which were commonly used at the time, and which in many instances are daily used at this day, even by the most eminent men of science. Ordinary speech primarily and properly describes what comes under the senses; and somewhat in the same way the sacred writers, as the Angelic Doctor also reminds us, "went by what sensibly

[5] *In Gen. op. Imperf.* ix, 30.
[6] *De Gen. ad Litt.*, i, 21, 41.
[7] S. Aug. *ib.* 9, 20.

appeared,"[8] or put down what God, speaking to men, signified, in the way men could understand and were accustomed to.

The unshrinking defense of the Holy Scripture, however, does not require that we should equally uphold all the opinions which each of the Fathers or the more recent interpreters have put forth in explaining it; for it may be that, in commenting on passages where physical matters occur, they have sometimes expressed the ideas of their own times, and thus made statements which in these days have been abandoned as incorrect. Hence, in their interpretations, we must carefully note what they lay down as belonging to faith, or as intimately connected with faith —what they are unanimous in. For "in those things which do not come under the obligation of faith, the saints were at liberty to hold divergent opinions, just as we ourselves are,"[9] according to the saying of St. Thomas. And in another place he says most admirably:

> When philosophers are agreed upon a pojnt, and it is not contrary to our faith, it is safer, in my opinion, neither to lay down such a point as a dogma of faith, even though it is perhaps so presented by the philosophers, nor to reject it as against faith, lest we thus give to the wise of this world an occasion of despising our faith.[10]

The Catholic interpreter, although he should show that those facts of natural science which investigators affirm to be now quite certain are not contrary to the Scripture rightly explained, must, nevertheless, always bear in mind, that much which has been held and proved as certain has afterwards been called in question and rejected. And if writers on physics travel outside the boundaries of their own branch, and carry their erroneous teaching into the domain of philosophy, let them be handed over to philosophers for refutation.

The principles here laid down will apply to cognate sciences, and especially to history. It is a lamentable fact that there are many who with great labor carry out and publish investigations on the monuments of antiquity, the manners and institutions of nations, and other illustrative subjects, and whose chief

[8] *Summa Theol.* p. i, q. lxxx, a. 1, ad 3.
[9] *In Sent.* ii, Dist. q. i, a. 3.
[10] *Opusc.* x.

purpose in all this is too often to find mistakes in the sacred writings and so to shake and weaken their authority. Some of these writers display not only extreme hostility, but the greatest unfairness; in their eyes a profane book or ancient document is accepted without hesitation, whilst the Scripture, if they only find in it a suspicion of error, is set down with the slightest possible discussion as quite untrustworthy. It is true, no doubt, that copyists have made mistakes in the text of the Bible; this question, when it arises, should be carefully considered on its merits, and the fact not too easily admitted, but only in those passages where the proof is clear.

VI. Inerrancy of Holy Scripture

It may also happen that the sense of a passage remains ambiguous, and in this case good hermeneutical methods will greatly assist in clearing up the obscurity. But it is absolutely wrong and forbidden either to narrow inspiration to certain parts only of Holy Scripture or to admit that the sacred writer has erred. As to the system of those who, in order to rid themselves of these difficulties, do not hesitate to concede that divine inspiration regards the things of faith and morals, and nothing beyond, because (as they wrongly think) in a question of the truth or falsehood of a passage we should consider not so much what God has said as the reason and purpose which He had in mind in saying it—this system cannot be tolerated.

For all the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical are written wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Ghost; and so far is it from being possible that any error can co-exist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it as absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true.

This is the ancient and unchanging Faith of the Church, solemnly defined in the Councils of Florence and of Trent, and finally confirmed and more expressly formulated by the Council of the Vatican. These are the words of the last:

The books of the Old and New Testament, whole and entire, with all their parts, as enumerated in the decree of the same Council (Trent) and in the ancient Latin Vulgate, are to be received as sacred and canonical. And the Church holds them as sacred and canonical not because, having been composed by human industry, they were afterwards approved by her authority; nor only because they contain revelation without error, but because, having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their Author.[1]

Hence, because the Holy Ghost employed men as his instruments, we cannot, therefore, say that it was these inspired instruments who, perchance, have fallen into error, and not the primary author. For, by supernatural power, He so moved and impelled them to write, He was so present to them, that the things which He ordered, and those only, they, first, rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise, it could not be said that He was the Author of the entire Scripture.

Such has always been the persuasion of the Fathers. "Therefore," says St. Augustine, "since they wrote the things which He showed and uttered to them, it cannot be pretended that He is not the writer; for His members executed what their head dictated."[2] And St. Gregory the Great thus pronounces: "Most superfluous it is to inquire who wrote these things—we loyally believe the Holy Ghost to be the author of the book. He wrote it who dictated it for writing; He wrote it who inspired its execution."[3]

It follows that those who maintain that an error is possible in any genuine passage of the sacred writings either pervert the Catholic notion of inspiration or make God the author of such error. And so emphatically were all the Fathers and Doctors agreed that the divine writings, as left by the hagiographers, are free from all error, that they labored earnestly, with no less skill than reverence, to reconcile with each other those numerous passages which seem at variance—the very passages which in great measure have been taken up by the "higher criticism;" for they were unanimous in laying it down that

[1] Sess. III, cap. ii, *de Rev.*
[2] *De Consensu Evangel.* i. 35.
[3] *Praef. in Job.* n. 2.

those writings, in their entirety and in all their parts were equally from the *afflatus* of Almighty God, and that God, speaking by the sacred writers, could not set down anything but what was true. The words of St. Augustine to St. Jerome may sum up what they taught:

> On my own part I confess to your charity that it is only to those books of Scripture which are now called canonical that I have learned to pay such honor and reverence as to believe most firmly that none of their writers has fallen into any error. And if in these books I meet anything which seems contrary to truth, I shall not hesitate to conclude either that the text is faulty, or that the translator has not expressed the meaning of the passage, or that I myself do not understand.[4]

But to undertake fully and perfectly, and with all the weapons of the best science, the defense of the Holy Bible is far more than can be looked for from the exertions of commentators and theologians alone. It is an enterprise in which we have a right to expect the cooperation of all those Catholics who have acquired reputation in any branch of learning whatever.

As in the past, so at the present time, the Church is never without the graceful support of her accomplished children; may their services to the Faith grow and increase! For there is nothing which We believe to be more needful than that truth should find defenders more powerful and more numerous than the enemies it has to face; nor is there anything which is better calculated to impress the masses with respect for truth than to see it boldly proclaimed by learned and distinguished men. Moreover, the bitter tongues of objectors will be silenced or at least they will not dare to insist so shamelessly that faith is the enemy of science, when they see that scientific men of eminence in their profession show towards faith the most marked honor and respect.

Seeing, then, that those can do so much for the advantage of religion on whom the goodness of Almighty God has bestowed, together with the grace of the faith, great natural talent, let such men, in this bitter conflict of which the Holy Scripture is the object, select each of them the branch of study most suitable to his circumstances, and endeavor to excel therein, and thus

[4] *Ep. lxxxii*, 1, et alibi.

be prepared to repulse with credit and distinction the assaults on the Word of God. And it is Our pleasing duty to give deserved praise to a work which certain Catholics have taken up—that is to say, the formation of societies and the contribution of considerable sums of money, for the purpose of supplying studious and learned men with every kind of help and assistance in carrying out complete studies. Truly an excellent manner of investing money, and well suited to the times in which we live! The less hope of public patronage there is for Catholic study, the more ready and the more abundant should be the liberality of private persons—those to whom God has given riches thus willingly making use of their means to safeguard the treasure of His revealed doctrine.

In order that all these endeavors and exertions may really prove advantageous to the cause of the Bible, let scholars keep steadfastly to the principles which We have in this letter laid down. Let them loyally hold that God, the Creator and Ruler of all things, is also the Author of the Scriptures—and that, therefore, nothing can be proved either by physical science or archaeology which can really contradict the Scriptures.

If, then, apparent contradiction be met with, every effort should be made to remove it. Judicious theologians and commentators should be consulted as to what is the true or most probable meaning of the passage in discussion and the hostile arguments should be carefully weighed. Even if the difficulty is after all not cleared up and the discrepancy seems to remain, the contest must not be abandoned; truth cannot contradict truth, and we may be sure that some mistake has been made either in the interpretation of the sacred words or in the polemic discussion itself; and if no such mistake can be detected, we must then suspend judgment for the time being. There have been objections without number perseveringly directed against the Scripture for many a long year, which have been proved to be futile and are now never heard of; and not infrequently interpretations have been placed on certain passages of Scripture (not belonging to the rule of faith or morals) which have been rectified by more careful investigations.

As time goes on, mistaken views die and disappear; but "truth

remaineth and groweth stronger forever and ever."[5] Wherefore, as no one should be so presumptous as to think that he understands the whole of the Scripture, in which St. Augustine himself confessed that there was more that he did not know, than that he knew,[6] so, if he should come upon anything that seems incapable of solution, he must take to heart the cautious rule of the same holy Doctor:

> It is better even to be oppressed by unknown but useful signs, than to interpret them uselessly and thus to throw off the yoke only to be caught in the trap of error.[7]

As to those who pursue the subsidiary studies of which We have spoken, if they honestly and modestly follow the counsels We have given, if by their pen and their voice they make their studies profitable against the enemies of truth, and useful in saving the young from the loss of their Faith, they may justly congratulate themselves on their worthy service to the sacred writings, and on affording to Catholicism that assistance which the Church has a right to expect from the piety and learning of her children.

Conclusion

Such, Venerable Brethren, are the admonitions and the instructions which, by the help of God, We have thought it well, at the present moment, to offer to you on the study of Holy Scripture. It will now be your province to see that what We have said be observed and put in practice with all due reverence and exactness; that so We may prove Our gratitude to God for the communication to man of the words of His wisdom, and that all the good results so much to be desired may be realized, especially as they affect the training of the students of the Church, which is Our own great solicitude and the Church's hope. Exert yourselves with willing alacrity, and use your authority and your persuasion in order that these studies may be held in just regard and may flourish in seminaries and in the educational institutions which are under your jurisdiction. Let them

[5] 3 Esdr. 4: 38.
[6] *Ad Ianuar.* ep. lv, 21.
[7] De Doct. Chr. iii, 9, 18.

flourish in completeness and in happy success, under the direction of the Church, in accordance with the salutary teaching and example of the holy Fathers, and the laudable traditions of antiquity; and, as time goes on, let them be widened and extended as the interests and glory of truth may require—the interest of that Catholic truth which comes from above, the never-failing source of man's salvation.

Finally, We admonish, with paternal love, all students and ministers of the Church always to approach the sacred writings with reverence and piety; for it is impossible to attain to the profitable understanding thereof unless the arrogance of "earthly" science be laid aside, and there be excited in the heart the holy desire for that wisdom "which is from above." In this way the intelligence, which is once admitted to these sacred studies, and thereby illuminated and strengthened, will acquire a marvelous facility in detecting and avoiding the fallacies of human science, and in gathering and using for eternal salvation all that is valuable and precious; whilst, at the same time, the heart will grow warm, and will strive, with ardent longing, to advance in virtue and in divine love.

Blessed are they who examine His testimonies; they shall seek Him with their whole heart.[8]

And now, filled with hope in the divine assistance, and trusting to your pastoral solicitude—as a pledge of heavenly grace, and a sign of Our special good-will—to you all, and to the clergy, and the whole flock entrusted to you, We lovingly impart in Our Lord the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at St. Peter's, at Rome, the 18th day of November, 1893, the eighteenth year of Our Pontificate.

POPE LEO XIII.

[8] Ps. xviii. 2.

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